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ABSTRACT

This study describes a program designed to increase the communication skills of at-risk students. The targeted population consists of kindergarten through third grade students in two elementary schools in a community in central Illinois. The status of family income ranges from low to high levels. Evidence for the existence of inadequate communication skills is documented through an observation checklist, case studies, and diagnostic screening. Data gathered from the professional literature suggests that the probable causes for inadequate communication can be classified into five categories. Poor health and substance abuse affect students' developmental learning. Economic factors such as working parents and lack of parental responsibility result in students coming to school with delayed communication skills. Emotional factors such as divorce and low self-esteem contribute to the decline in a student's academic progress. The increased use of television and limited life experiences allow for little social interaction. A stressful classroom environment where teachers use limited instructional strategies allows for minimal communication opportunities. A review of solution strategies suggested by professional literature combined with an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of a two-pronged problem solving approach incorporating a low-stress, high-challenge, student-centered learning environment and instruction that incorporates higher level thinking skills and cooperative learning. Post intervention data indicated an increase in oral and written communication skills, including the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting. Contains 19 references and 4 tables of data. Appendixes contain an observation checklist, an outline of case study procedures, student worksheets, directions for cooperative activities and class projects, and outlines for teachers. (Author/SR)

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IMPROVING STUDENT ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF HIGHER LEVEL THINKING

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ABSTRACT

This study describes a program designed to increase the communication skills of at-risk students. The targeted population consists of kindergarten through third grade students in two elementary schools in a community in central Illinois. The status of family income ranges from low to high levels. Evidence for the existence of inadequate communication skills will be documented through an observation checklist, case studies, and diagnostic screening.

Data gathered from the professional literature suggests that the probable causes for inadequate communication can be classified into five categories. Poor health and substance abuse affect students' developmental learning. Economic factors such as working parents and lack of parental responsibility result in students coming to school with delayed communication skills. Emotional factors such as divorce and low self-esteem contribute to the decline in a student's academic progress. The increased use of television and limited life experiences allows for little social interaction. A stressful classroom environment where teachers use limited instructional strategies allows for minimal communication opportunities.

A review of solution strategies suggested by professional literature combined with an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of a two-pronged problem solving approach incorporating a low-stress, high challenge, student centered learning environment and instruction that incorporates higher level thinking skills and cooperative learning.

Post intervention data indicated an increase in oral and written communication skills, including the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted primary buildings exhibit inadequate oral and written communication skills. Evidence for the existence of this problem include kindergarten screening, an increase in the number of students being referred for developmental language problems, teacher assessment, documentation of student performance, student writing samples, and the Illinois Goal Assessment Program scores.

Immediate Problem Context

Site A

The building complex houses a section for Even Start, a preschool family education program; a primary school; and a junior high school. Even Start consists of a classroom for infant-toddlers and a classroom for 2 and 3-year olds. The preschool family education program consists of a classroom for 4 and 5-year-olds and a classroom for adult education. The primary school consists of two sections each, kindergarten through third grade. The junior high school consists of two sections each of seventh and eighth grades. Other features of the building include carpeting, air-conditioning, and open classrooms.

The primary school targeted for this study has an all white population of 191 students. The average class size in kindergarten through third grade is 23.5 students. Thirty-one percent of the student population is low-income. Student attendance rate is 96.2% with a mobility rate of 6.5%.

The faculty is made up of a principal, two teachers for each grade level kindergarten through third grade, a part time music teacher, a part time physical education teacher, a part time speech therapist, a Title 1 teacher, a learning center teacher, and a part time resource teacher. Other support staff include a secretary, a learning center aide, a Writing to Read aide, a counselor, a nurse, and four lunchroom supervisors. The make-up of the staff is 92% female and 8% male. Most of the teachers have 20 or more years of experience, and 4 teachers have their master's degree.

The kindergarten and first grade programs consist of a non-graded curriculum of reading, writing, and math. The areas of science, social studies, and health are integrated throughout the other curriculum areas. The second grade curriculum consists of reading, spelling, writing, and math. One classroom uses the traditional letter grade assessment, and the other classroom uses student portfolio assessment. Science, social studies, and health are taught as separate subjects and are not graded in either section. The third grades have an entire graded curriculum of reading, language, spelling, writing, math, science, social studies, and health. Each grade level has 60 minutes a week of both music and physical education. Grades K-3 have four 30-minute activity periods per week in the learning center.

Programs available to meet the special needs of students include resource services for grades K-3, Reading Recovery for grade 1, Title 1 services for grades 2-3, speech for grades K-3, Project Challenge for grade 3, and a before and after school Latch Key program.

Within the K-3 structure, two communities have been developed. Each community is made up of one section of each grade level. The students basically stay in the same community from kindergarten through third grade. Changes in community assignments may occur through teacher or parent requests. Community teachers plan together and develop multi-age activities for a 45-minute period once a week.

Kindergarten and first grade have Writing to Read as part of their daily curriculum. First grade starts the program at the beginning of the year. Writing to Read is 60 minutes daily. Kindergarten starts the program second semester for 45 minutes daily. The second and third grades have a program called Writing to Write which is 30 minutes daily.

The school has become involved with the community through business partnerships. This school has a partnership with a local hotel chain and the telephone company. Technology has become a large part of the curriculum. Several classrooms are equipped with five networked computers. The learning center has three computer labs each with a bank of eight to ten computers.

Site B

The primary school, housed in a modern, one story building, consists of three sections each, kindergarten through third grade. Features of the building include new carpeting and windows. The student population consists of 285 children. The average class size in kindergarten through third grade is 22 students. Forty-four percent of the student population is low-income. The school attendance rate is 95.7% with a mobility rate of 10.8%.

The faculty is made up of a principal, three teachers for each grade level kindergarten through third grade, a part time music teacher, a part time physical education teacher, a part time speech therapist, two Title 1 teachers, a learning center teacher, and two special education

teachers. Other support staff include a secretary, a learning center aide, a Writing to Read aide, a counselor, a nurse, two special education assistants, and four lunchroom and playground supervisors. Most of the teachers have 20 or more years of teaching experience, and six teachers have their master's degree.

The school supports a full inclusion program for students with special needs. A Reading Recovery program for first graders with reading difficulty and a Title 1 program for second and third grade students is offered within the school. The school also has a teacher who visits the building once a week to work with the gifted students in the Connections program. Latch key services are provided before and after school for working parents. A breakfast and lunch program is available for all students.

The school uses a combination of a literature based reading series and a phonics program for reading instruction. In addition to a math textbook, teachers are encouraged to use manipulatives to provide a hands on method of math instruction. Other subjects of instruction include language, spelling, writing, science, and social studies. The learning center is a vital part of the school. Students have small group instruction in the learning center for two 30-minute periods each week. The technology curriculum is taught at this time. Seven classrooms are equipped with a five-station computer lab, and the learning center is equipped with a 12-station lab.

The Surrounding Community

Sites A and B are located in the same community. The community serves an agricultural and industrial area on the Illinois River, seventy miles south of the center of the state. It has a population of 32,507. Within this population, the ethnic breakdown is: .1% African-American, .2% American Indian, .4% Asian Pacific Islander, 99.9% Caucasian, and .1% other. The median

family income is $31,533, and 38.6% of the families are low income. There are six subsidized housing complexes located within the community. The median house value is $41,319.

Major employers of this community consist of a hospital, a federal prison, an insurance home office, the school district, the utility companies, and area manufacturing plants. Seventy five percent of the population are high school graduates, and 10% have a bachelor's degree or higher. In the labor force, 32% are technical or sales, 25% managerial or professional, 22.3% manufacturing, 24.2% professional and 11% skilled labor. The unemployment rate in the civilian labor force is 6.7%.

The community has two separate school districts, one elementary and one high school. The elementary school district consists of ten schools. The high school district has one community high school, which is housed on two campuses. In 1995, a referendum was approved to fund construction to unify the two campuses on one site. This project is expected to be completed by the fall of 1998. The community also has three parochial schools.

The elementary school district employs 260 teachers. All of the teachers are Caucasian. Of these teachers, 85.8% are female and 14.2% are male. Teaching experience averages 16.5 years, with an average salary of $35,317. One third of the teachers have a master's degree or above. The operating expenditure per pupil is $4,773 annually.

The community offers many programs to address the needs of families. Some of these programs include a Boys' and Girls' Club, the park district, a Union Mission, and a program called Drug Awareness Resistance Education.

An important component of this community is the Global Connection 2000 community wide network. Global Connection 2000 is a partnership between the local public elementary and high school districts, the public library, the local cable company, IBM, and the local telephone

company. This network has been developed to improve the quality of education through the use of a school-based community-wide network that will promote life-long learning and collaboration. Global Connection 2000 will connect the home to the school, the schools to one another, and each to the resources of the community, branching out through the World Wide Web.

National Context of the Problem

The problem of children being able to communicate both orally and through the written word has become a concern throughout the nation. In a 1995 article on oral communication, Perry states that "The lack of communicative abilities among today's students has been recognized nationally in such reports as *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education), *High School-A Report of Secondary Education in America* (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching), and *What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do* (College Entrance Examination Board)"(p. 87). Children are entering school with lower oral and written language skills. Evidence of this problem has been shown in preschool and kindergarten screening and an increase in the number of children of this age being referred for speech and language evaluation. Children are coming from a variety of family structures where opportunity for family activities and discussion may be limited. According to John Dewey (Squire, 1995, pg. 73), "We learn from experience, and that activities become experience only as we think about and act upon them". Family schedules have become so hectic that there is little time spent talking to one another. A major portion of children's free time is spent in activities such as watching television or playing computerized games that require very little interaction with others. When children enter the school environment with limited experiences, their ability to effectively communicate with teachers and peers is hindered.

The school curriculum needs to focus on higher level thinking skills in order to develop a student's ability to communicate. According to Zachman, Jorgensen, Barrett, Huisingh, Snedden, (1982),

> The value of thinking for oneself, of being able to reason logically in solving problems, of being able to predict outcomes and determine causes of events cannot be over estimated as necessary skills for daily living. From infancy through adulthood, the ability to think and reason determines a person's success or failure in dealing with life's varied experiences. Significant problems result when students lack the logical thinking skills necessary to communicate effectively. Preschool students lacking these skills experience difficulty answering simple questions and fail to see simple cause and effect relationships. At the elementary and secondary levels, students have difficulty in class discussion, respond with irrelevant answers, and approach everyday problems in unorganized and illogical ways. In addition, these students experience difficulty in their academics and in their relationships with family members, teachers, and peers. (p.5)

"Unless boys and girls develop competence in using language, they will be handicapped throughout schooling and life. Reading, writing, and oral language are the bedrock subjects of the curriculum, for they develop the competencies on which virtually all subsequent instruction and learning depends" (Squire, 1995, p.71). As educators, it is our responsibility to increase the potential of each student. One important way to do this is to teach the core thinking skills, the strategies, and mindware for our students to become productive, independent, articulate, problem solvers.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the need for increased oral and written communication skills in the targeted primary grade students, observation checklists (Appendix A), case studies (Appendix B), and diagnostic screenings (Appendix C) were completed by the researchers. During the first week of September, all students of the targeted classrooms were observed for the checklists and given the diagnostic screenings. Two at-risk students from each targeted classroom were selected for the case studies.

Each student was observed during a 30 minute time period. A summary of exhibited communication skills is presented in table one.

Table 1

Percentage of Students Exhibiting Communication Skills by Category Aug. 28 Through Sept. 2, 1998

Category	K	1	2	3	Total
Volunteers in class	89%	76%	29%	81%	62%
Asks questions	61%	72%	57%	38%	53%
Verbal interaction with peers	44%	88%	66%	90%	68%
Initiates conversation	55%	68%	48%	81%	58%
Listens attentively	50%	56%	33%	86%	52%
Stays on the topic	11%	52%	24%	67%	37%

An analysis of the data reveals that of the observed communication skills, staying on topic was of major concern at all grade levels. Over 60% of the children had no difficulty interacting with their peers and volunteering during class discussions. Of the targeted classrooms, the second grade fell below 50% in four out of six of the communication skill categories.

During the first week of September each student was asked to write a sentence. The criteria used by the researchers to analyze these sentences are shown in table two.

Table 2

Percentage of Students Able to Write a Sentence Using Established Criteria

Criteria	K	1	2	3	Total
Completeness of thought	NA	24%	95%	95%	68%
Clarity	NA	24%	76%	70%	55%
Use of two or more descriptors	NA	0%	24%	10%	11%

Of the targeted classrooms, the first grade showed minimal ability to write a clear, complete thought, falling below 25% in both areas. Ninety-five percent of the second and third grade students were able to write using a complete thought and at least 70% wrote with clarity. Only 11% of the students used descriptors in their writing with a noticeable decline between second and third grade students. The kindergarten students were not included in this portion of the data as the skills being observed were not developmentally appropriate.

During the first week of September each student was asked to organize three thoughts sequentially. A summary of the sequencing skills (Appendix D) of the targeted students is presented in table three.

Table 3

Percentage of Students Able to Organize Three Thoughts Sequentially.

Sequencing	K	1	2	3	Total
Students able to organize three thoughts sequentially.	67%	72%	48%	86%	68%

Of the targeted student population tested, the second graders exhibited a great deal of difficulty with sequencing. The kindergarten, first grade, and third grade exhibited over 65% proficiency.

During the first week of September each student was asked to predict one logical outcome from a picture or a story. A summary of the predicting skills (Appendix E) of the targeted students is presented in table four.

Table 4

Percentage of Students Able to Predict One Logical Outcome.

Predicting	K	1	2	3	Total
Students able to predict one logical outcome.	78%	60%	71%	90%	74%

Of the student population tested, over 60% of the students were able to make accurate predictions of one obvious outcome.

The eight case study students were interviewed by the researchers, and given the Gardner Receptive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test (ROWPVT), and the Gardner Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT). A standard score (ss) of 100 represents average performance with a standard deviation of 15.

Case study number one is a kindergarten student. The scores for case study one are ROWPVT-ss 103 and EOWPVT-ss 82. In the interview, when asked what they could tell about a

picture, the student used complete sentences which consisted of repetitive four word responses such as, I see a fish, I see a bear... No descriptive words, very little prior knowledge, or logical thinking was used. Case study number two is a kindergarten student. The scores for case study two are ROWPVT-ss 88 and PVT-73. In the interview, when asked to tell about the picture, the student used one-word responses to identify items in the picture such as boat, tractor, or car. The student used no descriptive words, prior knowledge, or logical thinking.

Case study number three is a first grade student. The scores for case study three are ROWPVT-SS 93 and EOWPVT-86. In the interview, when asked to tell about the picture, the student sat silently covering their face with their hands. No response was given even after wait time was used with the student. Case study four is a first grade student. The scores for case study four are ROWPVT-ss 91 and EOWPVT-ss 89. In the interview, when asked to tell about the picture, the student responded with one-word answers naming items that were familiar such as cat, bird, owl, and plane. At one point the student pointed at the picture and said they did not know what that was. No descriptors were used.

Case study number five is a second grade student. The scores for case study five are ROWPVT-ss 100 and EOWPVT-ss 76. In the interview, when asked to tell about the picture, the student used complete sentences and prior knowledge as they related the items in the picture to personal experience. The student did not use descriptive words. Case study number six is a second grade student. The scores for case study six are ROWPVT-ss 104 and EOWPVT-ss 97. In the interview, when asked to tell about the picture, the student sat silently and would not respond. After a lengthy wait time, the interview was concluded.

Case study number seven is a third grade student. The scores for case study seven are ROWPVT-ss 101 and EOWPVT-ss 94. In the interview, the student was hesitant to speak and

ss 110 and EOWPVT-ss 125. In the interview, the student rapidly identified items in the picture, but did not use complete sentences or descriptive words. No use of prior knowledge was exhibited.

All of the eight case study students scored within the average criteria (ss 85-115 represents average performance) on the ROWPVT. On the EOWPVT, five of the case study students scored within the average to above average range. Three of the case study students had scores below the average criteria. Therefore one can conclude, that since all of the case study students have average receptive vocabulary skills and the majority of the students have average expressive vocabulary skills, all students should be able to benefit from the interventions being implemented to promote increased oral and written communication skills.

Probable Causes

A review of the professional literature suggests that the probable causes for inadequate communication among primary grade children can be classified into the following five categories: physical, economic, emotional, social, and instructional. The change in family structure is the underlying connection between the five stated categories. The American family continues to change, and educators must be ready to address the needs of students affected by increasing divorce, teenage pregnancies, and single parent homes. These factors all contribute to the emotional difficulties that children carry with them into the classroom (Rubin & Borgers, 1991).

Substance abuse is on the increase in today's society. "Crack babies and children born of alcoholic and drug-addicted mothers, as well as babies who received no prenatal care, will be entering our classrooms in greater numbers. We face a potential population of educationally at-risk students in our schools in numbers that threaten to overwhelm the system""(Gore, 1991, p. 154). The general physical health of the students is declining contributing to lower academic achievement and delayed

entering our classrooms in greater numbers. We face a potential population of educationally at-risk students in our schools in numbers that threaten to overwhelm the system""(Gore, 1991, p. 154). The general physical health of the students is declining contributing to lower academic achievement and delayed developmental milestones. Fuller, (1992, p. 9), states that "poverty affects the less obvious needs that influence a child's ability to perform well academically and within his or her environment."

According to Lickona, (1993), in our nation today "one in five children is poor." The relationship of children born into poverty and its effect on their development is well documented. Schorr (as cited in Hanson & Carta, 1995, p. 205) found "the stress experienced by families associated with poverty (e.g., financial strain, malnutrition, exposure to violence, isolation) often persist over children's lifetimes and continue their destructive impact, causing a downward spiral of development." The children are in "double jeopardy" as they face greater risks of illness, family stress, and poor living conditions (Kaplan-Sanoff, Parker, & Zuckerman, 1991). The emotional frame of mind of the student has a direct effect on their academic achievement. Children exposed to violence, physical and mental abuse, divorce, or homelessness have lower self-esteem and increased behavior problems (Hansen & Carta, 1995). These conditions impact the students' academic development and social interaction in the classroom.

Along with family structure, social interaction between family members has drastically changed. The "traditional" evening meal where family members shared conversation about their day is a rarity. The television has become a low cost day-care provider and tranquilizer. These along with the increased popularity of video games, create an atmosphere where children have little or no opportunity for social interaction or conversation (Belk & Jinks, 1993; Pogrow, 1990). Instead of conversation, children are talked *to* and *at* but not *with*. Within the home, children are

not exposed to well-spoken sentences and proper syntax. "So, just as little children are denied good nutrition, other children do not get the linguistic environment they need to begin to build vocabulary that prepares them for future schooling" (Boyer, 1992, p. 22). Outside the home, many children have little opportunity to experience family vacations, trips to the library, and other experiences such as dance or music lessons that would develop a child's natural talents (Fuller, 1992).

Not only are many children not given the opportunity to develop communication skills at home, these same opportunities are not provided within the school setting. The traditional classroom where students are expected to respond only to direct questioning, one to two word answers, teacher lecture, and little peer interaction does not foster good communication skills. The classroom should be a non-threatening, low stress environment where students feel safe enough to express their ideas and opinions (Jensen, 98; Bacon & Thayer-Bacon, 1993). "The activities of the school should no longer be largely limited to reading, listening, and repetitive practice, but should include experiences in which children work cooperatively with others..." (Tyler, 1992, XIII).

As previously stated, the changes in the American family structure have had a profound impact on the communication skills of today's students. Increasing numbers of students come to school lacking the physical, emotional, financial, and social support of the traditional family. This places a greater burden on the schools to provide children a stimulating, supportive environment for learning (Rubin & Borgers, 1991).

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

A review of the recent professional literature addressing the communication skills of children supports the need for changes in the way today's children are being educated. Problems in oral communication do not come from just one single cause, so one type of intervention will not be effective. Hanson and Carta (1995) feel that support for parents and children should begin at the earliest possible point to help establish relationships and relieve sources of stress. School-based interventions along with intensive family support programs are necessary.

Children develop life-long skills and attitudes early in life. In the early years, children are developing sophisticated language skills and acquiring the ability to connect thought to language to action (Myers, 1991). Intervention in these early years offers a great opportunity to minimize learning problems in future schooling. Early childhood programs have a lot to offer children and parents. Programs such as Head Start and preschool help children improve cognitive performance and have greater success in school (Behrman, 1995). Through these programs parents are taught how to interact with their children.

With the dramatic change in society, today's teachers need to become more knowledgeable and interactive with their students (Rubin & Borgers, 1991). The traditional classroom is undergoing significant changes. The teacher is assuming the role of facilitator in

many instances and not just a dispenser of knowledge. There is a need for staff development opportunities so teachers can become aware of new teaching strategies. Teachers who are in a school that encourages and facilitates their intellectual growth will in turn create a classroom and instruction that develops their students' intellectual growth (Costa, 1985).

Students need to become more actively involved in the learning process. According to Pogrow (1992), getting students to become more reflective learners involves a need to integrate three key components: an outstanding curriculum, outstanding teaching, and students with a predisposition to become reflective. This is especially true for at-risk students. In order to foster this involvement, the classroom environment should be thoughtfully planned. The room arrangement should invite interaction, openness, and flexibility (Cameron, 1992). The furniture should provide the flexibility to support a multitude of classroom activities that promote interaction with peers and teachers. Classroom arrangement should provide an area for whole class activities, small group work, and a quiet area for individual work and reflection. Students should be exposed to printed language from every direction (Fogarty, 1997). Student work should be prominently displayed in all available locations around the room. Teachers need to create a visually stimulating, word-enriched atmosphere full of posters, pictures, mobiles, maps, and graphic organizers.

Equally important to the learning environment is the emotional setting created in the classroom. Students need to become risk takers and feel comfortable enough to share their ideas with others. Time should be made available for "real talk" where teachers and students share their thoughts and thinking processes about topics they feel are important (Bacon & Thayer-Bacon, 1993). During these times, the teacher can model good manners, good communication skills, and risk taking. Students and teachers need to learn to listen with an open mind to what

others have to say and be receptive to new ideas. "The emotional climate is the key to opening the mind to explorations and investigations. When students feel safe, the cognitive brain is able to engage and process..." (Fogarty, 1997, p. 70).

The students in today's classrooms need to learn how to process information and make connections rather than concentrating on repetition, memorization, and drill. According to Gough (1991),

> Perhaps most importantly in today's information age, thinking skills are viewed as crucial for educated persons to cope with a rapidly changing world. Many educators believe that specific knowledge will not be as important to tomorrow's workers and citizens as the ability to learn and to make sense of new information. (p. 1)

Plato (as cited in Bacon & Thayer-Bacon, 1993) defined thinking as internal speech, the talking one does with oneself, within one's own mind. Teachers need to be actively involved in the modeling of thinking skills and should also provide ample opportunities for the students to practice thinking. Unless good models of thinking are incorporated within the curriculum, students will have little chance to learn to think better (Willis, 1992). According to Thacker (as cited in Gough, 1991), teachers need to be aware of thinking skills and the techniques necessary for creating an environment that sets the stage for the development of critical and creative thinking. Essential components of the thoughtful classroom are the use of higher order thinking skills and cooperative learning.

"Communication is a learned skill. Listening and speaking skills are developed through exposure to well conceived techniques and from appropriate modeling" (Perry, 1995, p. 87). The techniques for teaching higher level thinking foster students' listening and speaking skills. These techniques are:

- Help students learn to ask good questions.
- Recognize all responses.
- Provide think time to encourage students to use more than one-word responses.
- Provide non-threatening activities (Appendix F) that encourage active learning through questioning and analyzing.
- Teach students how to work effectively in cooperative groups.

"Interest in thinking skills instruction is fueled by the hope that such an approach—as opposed to rote memorization, drill, and repetition—will promote excitement and enthusiasm in the classroom, and thus raise overall student achievement" (Gough, 1991, p. 1).

In order to promote a classroom environment where higher level thinking skills are fostered, cooperative learning activities (Appendix F) are a necessary component. Cooperative learning groups ideally consist of two to four students who work together on a group lesson or project. The instructor assigns roles and responsibilities to the group members. Roles vary depending on the activity, but could include roles such as timekeeper, materials manager, recorder, and task leader. Cooperative groups foster increased communication between group members. "In cooperative groups, the learner hears what others are thinking and speaks about what he or she is thinking" (Fogarty, 1997, p. 139). It is well documented that the use of cooperative learning has educational benefits. According to Costa (1991),

> It is generally accepted that the acquisition of thinking abilities can best be experienced, practiced, analyzed and applied in cooperative settings. Higher-level thinking is enhanced when members of a group learn to listen, value each member's unique contribution, take another person's point of view, engage in a variety of group roles, achieve consensus and resolve conflicts. (p. v)

In addition to increased communication skills, cooperative groups also encourage group members to practice social interaction. Taking turns, sharing materials, staying on task, and showing leadership are all necessary components of a successful cooperative group.

Developing higher order thinking skills is dependent upon four components. Classroom climate is the basis for this development. Strategies for setting the climate for a thinking classroom could include learning centers, wait time, response strategies such as cueing, and room arrangement. The second component is the teaching of thinking. Teachers should include a variety of learning opportunities that incorporate problem solving, collaborative thinking, decision making, and performance. Next, the students should be involved in activities that provide interaction with thinking. The use of integrated curriculum, multiple intelligences, and graphic organizers provide that practice. The last component is thinking about thinking. Students need to be given time to reflect on their thinking and learning. This can be done through the use of journal writing, sentence stems (Appendix G), and PMIs (Appendix H). When students understand their thinking, they are able to connect their thinking to life experiences. Students need to transfer knowledge into practical application (Fogarty, 1997).

The importance of communication and thinking skills can not be underestimated. The students' future successes in school and chosen careers are dependent upon their mastery of these skills.

Project Objectives and Goals

As a result of instructional emphasis on communication skills during the period of September 1998 and February 1999, the kindergarten through third grade students of the targeted

classes will increase their use of communication skills as measured by teacher observations, teacher-constructed tests, and case studies (Appendix B).

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Create a low stress, high challenge, student learning environment.
2. Cooperative learning activities (Appendix F) to be taught three times a week.
3. Thematic units (Appendix I) that incorporate the eight intelligences.
4. A variety of learning activities that encourages transfer (Appendix J).
5. The use of the three-story intellect model (Appendix K).
6. Materials that provide opportunities for students to organize thoughts (Appendix L), predict outcomes (Appendix M), write complete sentences (Appendix N), and use descriptive words (Appendix O) will be used.

Project Action Plan

The following plan was designed to implement the following solution component: increasing students' use of communication skills. The plan will be in effect during the period of September 1998 to February 1999.

September, 1998

- The classroom will be set up with learning centers.
- Visual cues will be displayed around the room with the use of pictures, words, phrases, stories, and student work.
- All students will be observed for thirty minutes during the first two weeks, noting evidence of the six communication categories on the observation checklist (Appendix A).
- All students will be screened on the following skills: organizing thoughts sequentially, predicting outcomes, writing a complete sentence, and using descriptive words (Appendix C).

- Two at risk students from each grade level of the targeted classrooms will be chosen for case studies (Appendix B).
- Student interviews will be completed individually between the teacher and each case study student.
- A standardized test will be administered to the eight case study students.
- Cooperative learning activities (Appendix F) will be done three times a week focusing on the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting.
- Journal writing will begin.

October, 1998

- Journal writing will continue.
- Cooperative learning activities will continue three times a week focusing on the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting.
- Visual cues will be added.

November 1998

- All students will be observed during the first two weeks using the observation checklist.
- All students will be screened on the following skills: organizing thoughts sequentially, predicting outcomes, writing a complete sentence, and using descriptive words.
- Cooperative learning activities will continue three times a week focusing on the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting.
- Case study students will be interviewed individually by the teacher.
- Visual cues will be added.

- Journal writing will continue.

December, 1998

- Journal writing will continue.
- Cooperative learning activities will continue three times a week focusing on the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting.
- Visual cues will be added.

January, 1999

- A thematic unit (Appendix I) incorporating the eight intelligences will begin and be ongoing for approximately three weeks.
- Journal writing will continue.
- Cooperative learning activities will continue three times a week focusing on the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting.
- Visual cues will be added.

February, 1999

- All students will be observed for thirty minutes during the first two weeks.
- All students will be screened on the following skills: organizing thoughts sequentially, predicting outcomes, writing a complete sentence, and using descriptive words.
- The teacher will individually interview case study students.

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effectiveness of the intervention, the following tools and procedures will be followed:

1. Observation Checklist (Appendix A)

   Procedure: This instrument will be used in September, November, and February. Each student will be observed for thirty minutes. A checkmark will be placed in the appropriate column as the behavior is observed.

2. Student Interviews (Appendix B)

   Procedure: This instrument will be used with students chosen for the case study. The researcher will conduct a taped interview with each student individually in the months of September, November, and February.

3. Diagnostic Screening (Appendix C)

   Procedure: This instrument will be used in September, November, and February.

4. PMI Journals (Appendix P)

   Procedure: This instrument will be completed at the end of each week by the researchers. The researchers will record the progress, or lack of progress, and how intervention is effecting this process.

5. Student Journals (Appendix Q)

   Procedure: The students will begin journal writing in September and continue through February. The writing will reflect improvement or lack of improvement, in the students' written communication skills.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase the oral and written communication skills of children in a kindergarten through third grade classroom setting. The creation of a low stress, high challenge, student learning environment, the implementation of cooperative learning activities, and the use of materials to allow students to organize their thoughts and write well developed sentences were selected to bring about the desired growth.

At the beginning of the school year, the physical environment of the classrooms was established. This was done through the use of learning centers and visual cues displayed throughout the rooms. The learning centers were created to accommodate cooperative learning activities and to stimulate student interest. The visual cues included pictures, phrases, and commonly used words to encourage the oral communication of the students. A positive classroom climate was fostered by allowing students to interact with each other through getting acquainted activities, sharing time, and periods of free exploration. Cooperative learning activities (Appendix F) were used to further expressive language development and encourage the use of the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting. Materials such as worksheets, manipulatives, and posters were provided to help students organize their thoughts (Appendix L), and use complete sentences (Appendix N) and descriptive words (Appendix O) in oral and written communication.

The researchers screened all students on the skills of organizing thoughts sequentially (Appendix D), predicting outcomes (Appendix E), writing a complete sentence (Appendix N), and using descriptive words (Appendix O). The screening was done during the first and second weeks of September, November, and February. An observation checklist (Appendix A) was developed in which the children were observed engaging in conversation, staying on task, and paying attention. These observations were made during the first two weeks of September, November, and February. In September, the researchers selected two at-risk children from each grade, kindergarten through third, to be included in case studies (Appendix B). The criteria used for selection were noted deficiencies on the observation checklist and standardized test scores. The case study students were observed more frequently and a portfolio of student work was collected for these students. Interviews were conducted with the case study students. The students were shown a picture and asked, "What can you tell me about this picture?" The researcher listened for use of complete sentences, descriptive words, prior knowledge, and logical thinking. Interviews were done at the beginning, middle, and end of the case study. The case study time frame was September through February.

The higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting outcomes were targeted by the researchers. For sequencing, in September, the kindergarten and first grade students were given three pictures to put in sequential order (Appendix D). The second and third grade students were given a worksheet with groups of three sentences to be put in sequential order. In November, the kindergarten and first grade students were given a group of four pictures to put in sequential order. Second and third grade students read a short paragraph and sequenced the events. In February, kindergarten and first grade students were given five pictures to put in sequential order. Second and third grade students read a story and sequenced the main events.

For predicting outcomes, in September, the kindergarten and first grade students were shown a picture of a situation with only one possible outcome (Appendix E). Students drew a picture of what they thought the outcome would be. Second and third grade students listened to part of a story read by the teacher and wrote down their prediction of what would happen next. In November, the kindergarten and first grade students were shown a picture of a situation with more than one possible outcome. Students drew or wrote two possible outcomes. Second and third grade students read a story with the teacher. At appropriate intervals, the students were asked to write down what they thought would happen next in the story. In February, kindergarten and first grade students were given a picture showing three activities. The students drew or wrote an outcome of each activity. Second and third grade students read a story with the teacher stopping periodically. The children were asked what would happen next and were to tell why they made that prediction.

In September, November, and February all students first through third grades were given a picture to write about. The researcher looked for completeness of thought, clarity, and use of two or more descriptive words.

Throughout, the project activities were on going to develop the higher level thinking skills of sequencing and predicting outcomes. One lesson each week was directed towards developing sequencing skills and one lesson each week was directed towards developing predicting skills. The lessons progressed in difficulty from September through February. Some examples of sequencing activities included arranging pictures in order, retelling events of a story, worksheets arranging sentences, and sequencing the steps for getting ready for school (Appendix F).

Activities for practice in predicting outcomes included listening to part of a story and predicting what would happen next, the strategy of Think Pair Share (Appendix R), and If...Then activities (Appendix S).

Cooperative learning was an integral part of the intervention plan. Due to time constraints, the number of cooperative learning activities was reduced from three times a week to twice a week. At the beginning of the school year the social skills for cooperative learning (Appendix T) were established and modeled for the students. Cooperative groups were flexible throughout the project depending on the needs of the students. The cooperative learning activities were used to increase verbal interaction among students, to allow for the sharing of ideas, and for reflective thinking. Some examples of cooperative learning lessons are getting acquainted activities, team building, and completion of assigned tasks (Appendix F).

Cooperative learning activities were also incorporated in the thematic units that were taught at each grade level. Each grade level, first through third, was involved in one thematic unit during the project time frame. The first grade students were involved in a thematic unit about clouds which lasted three weeks. The second and third grade students participated in thematic units lasting four weeks. The second grade students studied ocean life, and the third grade students studied magicians and illusion. For detailed information on each unit please see Appendix I. The thematic units included activities employing the multiple intelligences, which helped in the development of the higher level thinking skills and helped meet the needs of all learners.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of the intervention plan on oral and written communication skills of primary level children, the researchers collected data using a variety of methods. These

methods included observation checklists (Appendix A), diagnostic screenings (Appendix C), and case studies (Appendix B), which included student interviews and standardized testing. These data were collected from September 1998 through February 1999.

Table 1 represents the data collected from the observation checklists used to assess the oral and written communication skills of the targeted students during the months of September, November, and February. Areas of observation included volunteering in class, asking questions, verbal interaction with peers, initiating conversation, listening attentively, and staying on topic.

Table 1

Percentage of Students Exhibiting Communication Skills by Category.

Grade	K			1			2			3			Total		
	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.
Volunteers in class	89%	94%	100%	76%	96%	100%	29%	80%	90%	81%	86%	91%	62%	89%	95%
Asks questions	61%	76%	94%	72%	84%	92%	57%	80%	95%	38%	62%	77%	53%	76%	89%
Verbal interaction with peers	44%	88%	100%	88%	100%	100%	66%	75%	100%	90%	76%	100%	68%	85%	100%
Initiates conversation	55%	82%	100%	68%	88%	96%	48%	85%	95%	81%	71%	100%	58%	82%	97%
Listens attentively	50%	35%	87%	56%	64%	80%	33%	60%	85%	86%	57%	73%	52%	57%	81%
Stays on the topic	11%	18%	37%	52%	68%	80%	24%	65%	85%	67%	67%	86%	37%	58%	75%

An analysis of the data at the kindergarten level shows that staying on topic continues to be an area of concern. Although there was steady growth from September to February, only 37% of the targeted kindergarten students exhibited this skill. It should be noted that these kindergarten students have an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) with 50% being speech and language only. The thirty-minute observation period set up in the action plan appeared to be too long for the attention span of these students. The only other area of decline was in the skill of listening attentively. This was evident in the month of November with a drop from 50% to 35%. In February there was a definite increase in this area from 35% to 87%. Overall, the kindergarten students' verbalization skills, which included volunteering in class, asking questions, verbal interaction with peers, and initiating conversation, increased from September to February. The February percentages show a span of 94% to 100%.

The first grade data revealed steady growth in all observed areas. In September there was a concern in the areas of listening attentively and staying on topic. At that time, these two areas were 56% and 52% respectively. By February, listening attentively and staying on topic were both at 80%. Overall, the first grade students' verbalization skills, which included volunteering in class, asking questions, verbal interaction with peers, and initiating conversation, increased from September to February. The February percentages show a span of 92% to 100%.

The second grade data revealed steady growth in all observed areas. In September there was concern that the targeted students were below 50% in four out of six of the communication skill categories. In analyzing the February data, these areas all showed a marked improvement. Overall, the second grade students' verbalization skills, which included volunteering in class, asking questions, verbal interaction with peers, and initiating conversation, increased from September to February with a span of 85% to 100%.

The third grade data show growth in five of the six communication skill categories. It should be noted that in the area of listening attentively there was a considerable drop from 86% in September to 73% in February. In the areas of verbal interaction with peers and initiating conversation there was a decline in the month of November, but both areas were at 100% by February. Overall, the third grade students' verbalization skills, which included volunteering in class, asking questions, verbal interaction with peers, and initiating conversation, increased from September to February with a span of 77% to 100%.

An analysis of the aggregate data show staying on topic as an area of concern with only 75% of the targeted students exhibiting this skill. The other observed skills fell within a range of 81% to 100%.

Table 2 represents the percentage of students able to write a sentence using the established criteria of completeness of thought, clarity, and the use of two or more descriptors. The targeted kindergarten students were not included in this portion of the data gathering as the skills being observed were not developmentally appropriate.

Table 2

Percentage of Students Able to Write a Complete Sentence Using Established Criteria.

Grade	K			1			2			3			Total		
	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.
Completeness of thought	NA	NA	NA	24%	84%	100%	95%	100%	100%	95%	95%	100%	68%	92%	100%
Clarity	NA	NA	NA	24%	84%	100%	76%	85%	95%	70%	90%	100%	55%	86%	98%
Use of two or more descriptors	NA	NA	NA	0%	44%	84%	24%	52%	75%	10%	87%	91%	11%	56%	83%

In September, the targeted first grade students showed minimal ability in writing a clear, complete thought, falling below 25%. None of the students used two or more descriptors in their writing. In November, a significant increase was noted with 84% of the students able to write a clear, complete thought. By February, 100% of the targeted first grade students were able to write a clear, complete thought, with 84% using two or more descriptors (Appendix U).

In September, 95% of the targeted second grade students were able to write a complete thought. Seventy-six percent of the students wrote with clarity. The use of two or more descriptors was an area of concern with only 24% of the students exhibiting this skill. By February, 100% of the students were writing a complete thought with 95% showing clarity. The use of two or more descriptors had increased to 75%, showing significant growth.

In September, 95% of the targeted third grade students were able to write a complete thought. Seventy percent wrote with clarity. Only 10% of the students used two or more descriptors in their writing. By February, 100% of the students wrote a clear, complete thought. Considerable growth was shown in the use of two or more descriptors with an increase from 10% to 91%.

An analysis of the aggregate data shows considerable growth was demonstrated in the established criteria for writing a sentence. One hundred percent of the targeted students were able to write a complete thought by February. Ninety-eight percent were able to write with clarity. There was substantial growth in the use of two or more descriptors, with an increase from 11% in September to 83% in February.

Table 3 represents the percentage of students able to organize thoughts sequentially.

Table 3

Percentage of Students Able to Organize Thoughts Sequentially

Grade	K			1			2			3			Total		
	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.
Students able to organize thoughts sequentially.	67%	88%	81%	72%	72%	92%	48%	80%	90%	86%	95%	81%	68%	83%	86%

In September, the targeted second grade students exhibited difficulty in the area of sequencing, with 48% demonstrating this skill. There was an increase to 80% in November, with a showing of 90% by February. Kindergarten showed growth from September to February going from 67% to 81%. First grade showed growth from September to February going from 72% to 92%. Third grade showed an increase from 86% in September to 95% in November. There was a decline to 81% in February. Overall, the percentages increased from 68% in September to 86% in February.

Table 4 represents the percentage of students able to predict logical outcomes from a picture or a story.

Table 4

Percentage of Students Able to Predict Logical Outcomes.

Grade	K			1			2			3			Total		
	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept	Nov.	Feb.
Students able to predict logical outcomes.	78%	88%	94%	60%	84%	92%	71%	85%	95%	90%	95%	100%	74%	87%	95%

In September at least 60% of the targeted students at each grade level were able to predict one logical outcome from a picture or a story. By February, over 90% of the targeted students at each grade level exhibited this skill.

The eight case study students showed considerable growth from September to February in the use of complete sentences, descriptive words, prior knowledge, and logical thinking. In September, case study number one, a kindergarten student, used complete sentences that were repetitive in nature such as I see a fish, I see a bear... This student used no descriptive words, little prior knowledge, or logical thinking. In November, case study number one continued using complete sentences and added descriptive words. The use of logical thinking was evident. In February, case study number one enthusiastically used complete sentences filled with descriptive words. The sentences were well thought out and prior knowledge was evident when describing familiar activities. In September, case study number two, a kindergarten student, used one-word responses to identify items in the picture such as boat, tractor, car. The student used no descriptive words, prior knowledge, or logical thinking. In November, case study number two started using complete sentences and a few descriptive words. In February, the student continued to use complete sentences, adding more descriptive words, and displayed the use of prior knowledge and logical thinking when describing the picture.

Case study number three is a first grade student. In September, the student gave no response, sitting silently, covering their face with their hands. In November, the student began verbalizing using repetitive three word sentences such as There's an

airplane, There's a rabbit... There was no evidence of prior knowledge or logical thinking. In February, the student was very talkative and excited. The student used complete sentences with a few descriptors and used prior knowledge in relating personal experiences. In September, case study number four, a first grade student, responded with one word answers naming items that were familiar such as cat, bird, owl, and plane. The only response in the form of a complete sentence was I don't know what that is. In November, case study number four became more explicit using complete sentences containing at least one descriptor. The student demonstrated prior knowledge and logical thinking when making up a story to go with the picture. In February, the student continued to use complete sentences adding more descriptive words. The student related the picture to personal experiences and used logical thinking.

Case study number five is a second grade student. In September, the student used complete sentences and prior knowledge to relate the items in the picture to personal experience. The student did not use descriptive words. In November, the student continued to use complete sentences, adding a few descriptors. Prior knowledge was evident but there was no logical thinking. In February, the student continued to use complete sentences with several descriptors. Prior knowledge was used, but there was no evidence of logical thinking. In September, case study number six, a second grade student, sat silently and would not respond. After a lengthy wait time, the interview was concluded. In November, the student used complete sentences with no descriptors. Some prior knowledge was evident, but no logical thinking was used. In February, the student continued to use complete sentences using some descriptors. There was prior knowledge evident, but the responses were not lengthy enough to show logical thinking.

Case study number seven is a third grade student. In September, the student was hesitant to speak and used a very quiet voice. The student never used complete sentences or descriptive words. Some prior knowledge was evident. In November, the student was less hesitant to speak and used complete sentences. The student did not need much prompting and used prior knowledge and logical thinking. Descriptive words were still not evident at this time. In February, the student was very eager to talk and the interview became quite lengthy. The student used prior knowledge, logical thinking, and descriptive words. In September, case study number eight, a third grade student, rapidly identified items in the picture, but did not use complete sentences or descriptive words. No use of prior knowledge was exhibited. In November, the student used complete sentences that all began the same way such as There is a seal, There is a man... Some prior knowledge was used, but no logical thinking or descriptive words were evident. In February, the student was eager to talk, but quickly jumped from one idea to the next and rarely finished a complete thought. Prior knowledge and descriptive words were evident, but there was no logical thinking.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, the students showed a marked improvement in the use of oral and written communication skills. The interventions of a student centered learning environment, higher level thinking skills, and cooperative learning activities that encouraged transfer, had a direct impact upon the oral and written communication skills of the targeted students. The researchers found that the observation checklist (Appendix A) was beneficial in obtaining needed data during the implementation period. The data obtained from the checklist indicated strength in verbal

communication skills when initiated by the student. Cooperative learning activities, such as Think-Pair-Share (Appendix R), and increased sharing time provided enhanced opportunities for the students to interact with peers and teachers. The areas of listening attentively and staying on topic are both emerging skills for students in the primary grades. The interventions of the researchers fostered the steady increase of these two teacher directed skills at the targeted grade levels. In the area of writing a sentence, the students showed consistent growth across the targeted grade levels due to the intervention of providing a word rich environment along with activities that encouraged the students to express themselves in a more detailed and descriptive way (Appendix O). The data concerning the higher level thinking skill of sequencing revealed a drop in the percentage of students able to organize thoughts sequentially in the targeted third grade. The researchers attribute this to the difficulty of the reading material chosen to assess the students' ability in this area. The success of the other targeted grade levels in this area may be attributed to the intervention along with the maturity of the students. The growth of the students in the skill of predicting outcomes indicates that the interventions were beneficial. The students were encouraged to use higher level thinking skills to solve problems by exploring multiple solutions. They became comfortable knowing there can be more than one acceptable answer to a given problem. The atmosphere established in the classrooms guided the students toward this revelation.

The researchers recommend the implementation of the interventions to increase the oral and written communication skills of students. The implementation of these interventions is easily adapted to the teaching curriculum. The observation checklist (Appendix A) would be beneficial for teachers wanting to assess the

communication skills of their students. We feel that this research project was beneficial for the targeted students and we as teachers grew in knowledge and competency that will continue to enhance our classrooms.

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Appendices

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Name	Volunteers in class	Asks questions	Verbal Interaction with peers	Initiates conversation	Listens attentively	Stays on the topic
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
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27.						
28.						
29.						

Case Study

Our case study will focus on 8 at-risk students, 2 from each grade kindergarten through third. These students will be identified by deficiencies demonstrated on the observation checklist and standardized test scores. The study will include standardized testing, interviews, increased use of the observational checklist, and student work samples.

Interviews: During a taped interview, the student will be shown a picture. The interviewer will say to the student, "What can you tell me about this picture?" The interviewer will listen for:

- Use of complete sentences
- Use of descriptive words
- Use of prior knowledge
- Use of logical thinking

The interviews will be done at the beginning, middle, and end of the case study.

Standardized Testing: During the first and second weeks of September, one of the following standardized tests will be given.

- CELF
- TOLD
- Gardner Receptive ROWPVT
- Gardner Expressive EOWPVT
- PPVT-R

Diagnostic Screening

All students will be screened on the following skills:

- Organizing thoughts sequentially
- Predicting outcomes
- Writing a complete sentence
- Using descriptive words

Students will be screened during the first and second weeks of September, November, and February.

Sequencing

September: Kindergarten and first grade students will be given three pictures that need to be put in a sequential order.
Second and third grade students will be given a worksheet with groups of three sentences to be put in sequence.

November: Kindergarten and first grade students will be given a group of four pictures to put in sequential order.
Second and third grade students will read a short paragraph and sequence the events.

February: Kindergarten and first grade students will be given five pictures to put in sequential order.
Second and third grade students will read a story and sequence the main events.

Predicting Outcomes

September: Kindergarten and first grade students will be shown a picture of a situation with only one possible outcome. Students will be asked to draw a picture of what they think the outcome will be.
Second and third grade students will listen to part of a story read by the teacher. The students will write down their prediction of what will happen next.

November: Kindergarten and first grade students will be shown a picture of a situation that has more than one possible outcome. The students will be asked to draw or write two possible outcomes.
Second and third grade students will read a story with the teacher. At appropriate intervals, the students will be asked to write down what they think will happen next in the story. This procedure will continue until the completion of the story.

February: Kindergarten and first grade students will be given a picture that shows three activities. The student will be asked to draw or write an outcome of each activity in comparison with the others.
Second and third grade students and the teacher will read a story, stopping periodically. During the pauses, the children will be asked to write down what they feel will happen next and why.

Writing a Complete Sentence Using Descriptive Words

In September, November, and February all students will be given a picture and asked to write about it.
The teacher will look for:

- Completeness of thought
- Clarity
- Use of two or more descriptive words

Sequencing

Find The Right Order

_____ Ben brushes his teeth.
_____ Ben's mother tells him to get up.
_____ Ben rides the bus to school.

_____ The seed grew into a red flower.
_____ She gave her mother the flower.
_____ Jill planted a seed.

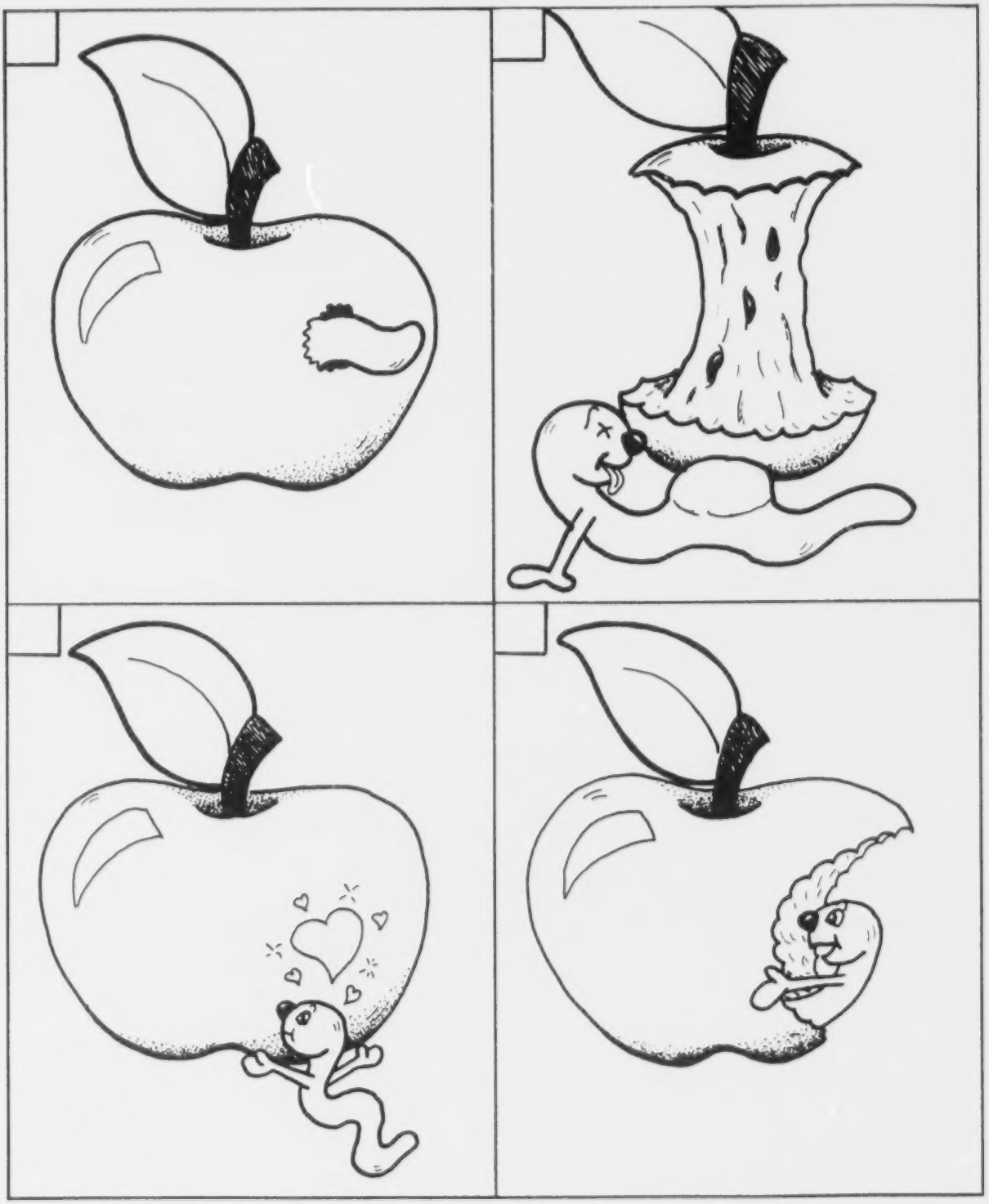
_____ It began to rain.
_____ The children went outside to play.
_____ The children ran inside the house.

_____ In the morning my alarm clock rings.
_____ Then I get out of bed.
_____ I wake up.

_____ Greg baked a cake.
_____ Greg made a list of things he needed to make a cake.
_____ Greg went to the store.

WILLIE APPLE WORM

Number in order. Color, cut out and paste in frame.



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Sir Chester's Adventure

Read the story.

Today was going to be a great day for Sir Chester. After all, this was his first day of being a real knight. He jumped out of bed and ran down the castle stairs. He grabbed his armor and flew out the castle door. Today he would chase Dradly the Dreaded Dragon to a faraway land.

Sir Chester stormed across the drawbridge on his horse Champ. Then he headed for the forest. Before long he spotted Dradly. He was down at the river washing his scales. Quickly, Sir Chester and Champ hid behind a tree.

Dradly raised his head, and flames shot out of his mouth. His huge tail swished back and forth. Then he roared, "Mmmmm! I could eat a knight and his horse for breakfast this morning!"

Chester and Champ looked at each other. Champ spun around. They headed for the castle. There was always tomorrow for chasing dragons!

Number these sentences in order.

____ They spotted Dradly at the river.

____ Champ stormed across the drawbridge.

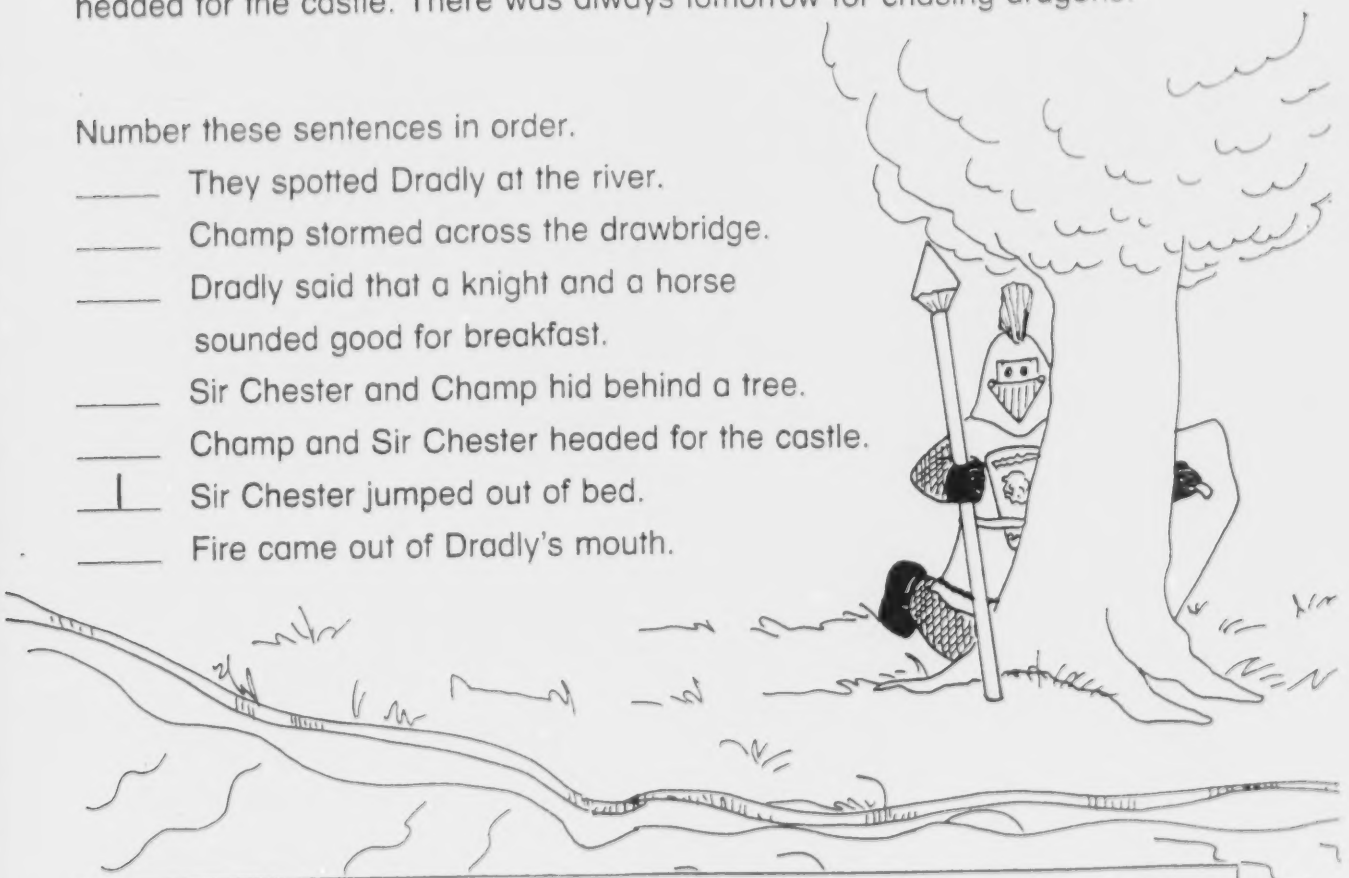
____ Dradly said that a knight and a horse sounded good for breakfast.

____ Sir Chester and Champ hid behind a tree.

____ Champ and Sir Chester headed for the castle.

1 Sir Chester jumped out of bed.

____ Fire came out of Dradly's mouth.



Bonus Box: On the back of this sheet draw a picture showing Dradly at the river. Write two sentences telling how you would chase him away.

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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: The students should cut apart the pictures at the bottom of the page. First, Directions A, one at a time, should be read aloud to the students. The students should listen to each direction and then paste the picture in the correct box. Next, Directions B, again, one at a time, should be read to the students. The students should listen to each direction and then paste the picture in the correct order of events.

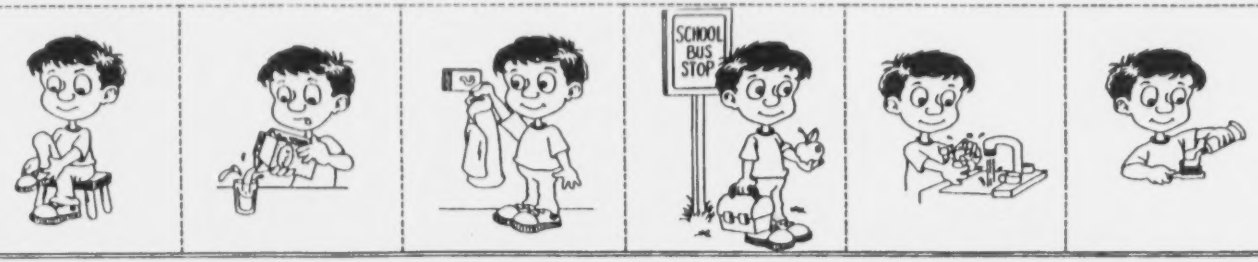
Directions A:

1. Find the picture of Joey brushing his teeth and paste it on Box 2.
2. Find the picture of Joey putting on his shoes and paste it on Box 4.
3. Find the picture of Joey waiting for the school bus and paste it on Box 6.

Directions B:

1. Before Joey brushed his teeth, he washed his hands. Find the picture of Joey washing his hands and paste it where it belongs.
2. Before Joey put on his shoes, he poured a glass of milk. Find the picture of Joey pouring a glass of milk and paste it where it belongs.
3. After Joey put on his shoes, he put his coat back on the hook because his mom said the weather was warm. Find a picture of Joey hanging up his coat and paste it where it belongs.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.



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Predicting

Task A: Predicting Possible Outcomes

I.E.P. Goal: The clinician will present the student with events that have several possible outcomes. The student will be able to supply at least two appropriate responses when asked to predict what might happen.

1. A boy is riding his bike home. What will he do next?
2. The girl finished drinking her juice. What did she do then?
3. We're out of milk. What will Mom do?
4. Your sister woke up with a fever. What did Mom do?
5. When you got home from school, you were really hungry. What did you do next?
6. You're all finished with your bath. What will you do next?
7. It's time for bed, and the toys are all over the floor. What should you do next?
8. The cake batter is in the pan, and the oven is hot. What will Mom do next?
9. The mailman just delivered the mail. What will you do next?
10. You just blew out the candles on your birthday cake. What will your friends do next?
11. Your family just sat down at the table for supper. What will they do next?
12. You put your cereal and sugar in the bowl. What will you do next?
13. You're playing outside, and suddenly it's starting to rain. What will you do next?
14. You lost your favorite toy. What will you do next?
15. You just got out of bed. What will you do next?
16. Dad thinks the grass is really long. What will he do?
17. You put toothpaste on your brush. What will you do next?
18. You finished your breakfast. What did you do next?
19. It's Saturday morning and you just woke up. What will you do next?

Predicting

Task B: Predicting One Outcome

I.E.P. Goal: When the clinician presents events that have only one possible outcome, the student will be able to respond appropriately.

Stimulus: "What will happen if _____?"

1. you leave the ice cream on the counter all night long
2. you close the drain on the bathtub and let the water keep running
3. you walk on the sidewalk after you walked barefoot in the mud
4. you drop a glass on the floor
5. your cat sees a mouse
6. you let a candle burn all day
7. you leave your bike out in the rain
8. you let go of your kite when it is high in the sky
9. you put a hot iron on a crayon
10. you try to roller skate on the grass
11. you pour water in a paper sack
12. you forget your lunch money at home
13. you walk barefooted on rocks
14. your dad trys to sleep in the baby's bed
15. you leave the door open in the wintertime
16. you pour water in a glass with a crack in it
17. you kick a ball really hard with your bare foot
18. you touch a hot stove
19. you pull your cat's tail
20. you wear a long sleeved sweater on a hot summer day
21. you wear a pair of pants that were too big
22. your shoelace breaks

And Then . . .

Look at each picture.
Then underline the sentence that tells what will probably happen next.

1.

a. A bear borrows the girl's suntan lotion.
b. It begins to snow.
c. The girl gets a sunburn.

2.

a. The boy buys more food because he is still hungry.
b. The boy begins to feel sick.
c. The boy juggles the food.

3.

a. The girl hits the ball and runs to first base.
b. The girl begins to dance.
c. The girl does a flip.

4.

a. The boy puts the snowball in his pocket to warm it up.
b. The boy eats the snowball for lunch.
c. The boy throws the snowball to a friend.

Try This!

Make Sense Draw a picture of someone in the middle of an activity. Then write three sentences telling what might happen next. Two can be silly, but one must make sense. Share your work with a friend.

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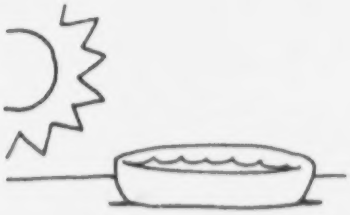
67

Name_____

The Space Mice are doing some experiments. Circle what will happen in the experiments.

1. A dish of water was left out in the sun.



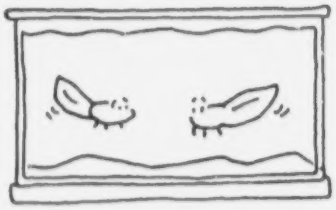
The water got cold.

The water evaporated.

2. The Space Mice put some tadpoles in their aquarium.

The tadpoles grew hind legs and their tails disappeared.

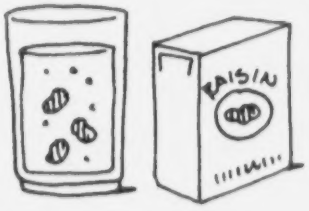
The tadpoles turned into fish.



3. The Space Mice put a raisin in a glass of bubbly soda.

The raisin stayed at the bottom of the glass.

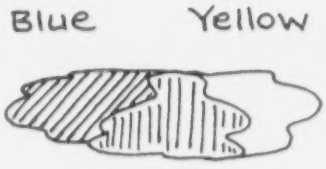
The raisin bounced around in the soda.



4. The Space Mice mixed yellow and blue paint together.

They made all the colors of the rainbow.

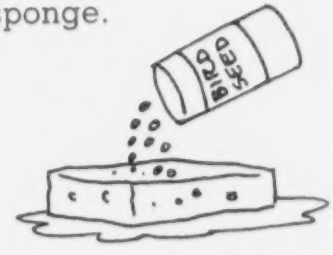
They made the color green.



5. The Space Mice sprinkled some birdseed on a wet sponge.

The seeds dried up.

The seeds sprouted.



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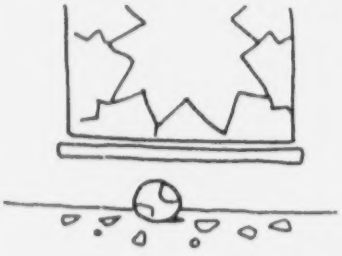
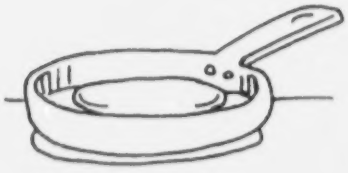
Name _____

Be a mouse detective! Read the sentences that give you the clues. Write what you think might have happened before.

1. The window glass was shattered, and there was a baseball on the living room floor.

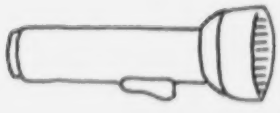


2. On the hot stove was a pancake, frying in a pan.



3. The cookie jar was empty and there were cookie crumbs all over the table.

4. The switch on the flashlight was on, but the flashlight would not work.



5. There was a fish in a bucket, a fishing pole, and wet boots on the cabin floor.

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Appendix F

Cooperative Learning Activities

Hand TREE

Objectives:
- To identify spatial concepts
- Follow directions
- Pair share groups

Materials:
- construction paper and crayons

Procedure:
- Working together, trace around your right hand, with your left thumb on the picture of the right thumb trace around your left hand.
- Share the picture and draw objects using the whole paper.
- Identify together the spatial concepts you have drawn.
- Report to the group
- Display around the room.

BUILD:
- B Creative thinking, decision making, application
- U Single product, shared materials
- I Random responses, individual application
- L Teacher observation and charting
- D Clarify, affirm, encouragement

SELF-ESTEEM KALEIDOSCOPE

By Anthony Flores (Mentor Teacher...Sacramento City Unified School District)

This particular art lesson may be done as an individual lesson, as a cooperative learning lesson, or as a class project. It is an art lesson which deals with objects which are very important in a child's life.

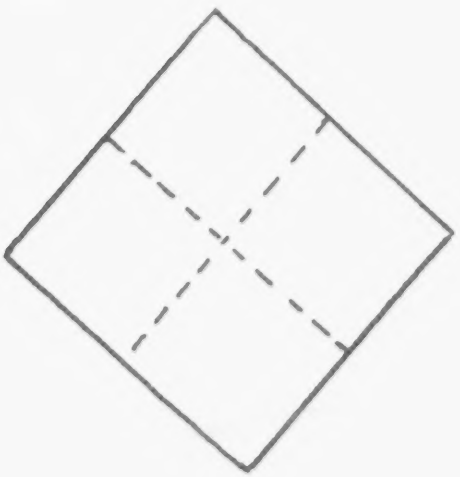
INDIVIDUAL KALEIDOSCOPES

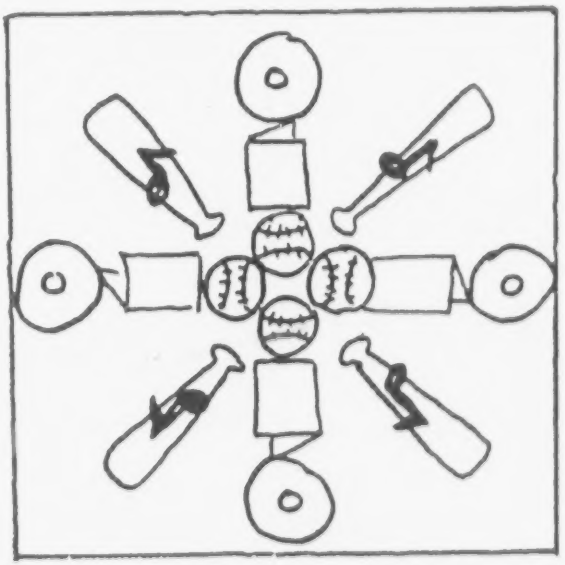
1. The child folds a piece of 12" by 12" paper in half horizontally and then vertically. (Black makes a nice background).

2. Next the child thinks of 5 or 6 objects important in his or her life and makes four cut and paste symbols of each of the objects chosen. Fox example: 4 baseballs, 4 books, 4 musical notes, 4 bats, 4 records.

   All four must be about the same size.

3. Next each set of objects are glued to the background at 90 degree angles. The next set of items are then glued right above the first. Continue until all objects have been glued onto the page.





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COOPERATIVE LEARNING GROUPS

1. Children get into groups of four. The children then take turns discussing things that are important to them.

2. Each child then chooses 1-2 items which are of importance to him/her and then makes four cut and paste samples of each of these items.

3. Perpendicular lines are then drawn on a piece of tag board (colored chart board).

4. Next, the children take turns gluing on their items as was done in the directions for the individual kaleidoscope.

CLASS PROJECT

1. Each child makes a set of four cut and paste items. These items should be 2 or 3 inches in size.

2. Next each child goes up to a large bulletin board which also has perpendicular lines on it and glues the objects onto the large board as described in the previous lessons. The board must be quite large to accommodate a class of 30 or more children.

   Explain to the students that they are not to place their objects on top of another child's objects. Explain that the objects should touch. If however, two children decide that their objects work well overlapped then they may do so.

3. Add a border around the entire board and make a title for top.

   Possibilities for the titles might be:
   * We All Have Special Interests
   * Our Class Is Special
   * We Are Special In Our Own Way

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Name _____ Following directions

Making A Friendship Quilt

Work together with your classmates to make a quilt square for a friendship quilt.

5	1	6
2	7	3
8	4	9

To make a quilt patch:

1. Write your name in box 1. Then use crayons or markers to decorate the box.
2. Ask a friend to write his or her name in box 2 and then decorate the box.
3. Complete box 3 and box 4 like you did box 2. Ask two different friends.
4. In boxes 5–9, draw and color one of the patterns below. Or make your own pattern.
5. Cut out the quilt square and glue it to a piece of construction paper.

Patterns:

72

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Note To Teacher: Use with "Colonial Quilts" on page 5.

Medium Lesson

Feely Box

Objectives:

- To improve use of attributes
- To improve descriptive skills
- To improve vocabulary skills

Materials: A blindfold, a shoebox filled with various items (such as a coin, paper clip, crayon, pencil, piece of cloth, key, plastic egg, rubber ball, piece of string, one Post-it Note, small box, Lego, etc.)

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Hold up the box and shake it, saying, *I have a feely box.* Tell the students they will have a chance to guess what is in the box.
2. Write the following categories on the board: size, shape, material (what it is made of), texture (how it feels). Discuss each category and ask the students to give examples of size words, shape words, etc.
3. Ask for a volunteer. A student comes forward and is seated in front of the class. Tell the student that he/she will be blindfolded and handed an item from the box.

   Before guessing the item, the student is to feel the item and tell its size, shape, texture and material. Chart all responses on the board. When the student has given all the appropriate information, he/she guesses the item. Provide cues as needed.

   Follow the same procedure with other students until all the items are described.

Examples of Descriptive Words:

short	flat	pointed	rough	rubber
long	square	tiny	smooth	metal
hard	round	small	sticky	wood
soft	oval	medium	coarse	cardboard
thin	rectangular	bumpy	paper	plastic
thick	triangular	fuzzy	wax	fabric

Example of Board Chart:

Size	Shape	Texture	Material	Item
small	round, long	smooth	wax	crayon
small	square, flat	smooth,sticky	paper	Post-it Note
medium	oval	smooth, hard	plastic	egg
small	triangular, flat	fuzzy, soft	fabric	piece of felt

Consultation Ideas:

- Discuss with the teacher which attributes are being taught in class.
- Teacher has the students write and illustrate items using the sentence starter: *The (item) is (attribute) and (attribute).* Teacher combines students' papers to make an attribute book.
- Teacher has upper grades write a paper using specific attributes or point out attributes in their literature.

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Medium Lesson

I Can Hear

Objectives:

- To improve categorization skills
- To improve vocabulary skills

Materials: A large piece of construction paper

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Write the words *I can hear* in the middle of a piece of construction paper.

   Tell the students that we hear many things every day.

2. Ask the students to think of as many things as possible that we can hear. Write the students' responses on the paper until it is full. Provide cues as needed.

3. Display the completed paper in the classroom.

Note: Any of the senses may be used in this activity.

Examples of Things We Hear:

Modification: For upper grades, categories may be used such as: things that ring, things that are loud, things that are quiet, animal sounds, etc.

Consultation Ideas:

- Discuss with the teacher which vocabulary words are being taught in class and incorporate them into this activity.
- Teacher has the students write and illustrate an "I Can Hear" book.

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Activity # 1 Getting to Know You

OBJECTIVE: To listen as group members tell about their families and be able to draw a picture of one of their group members and their family.

DESCRIPTION: Students will be put into groups of three. One group member will be the speaker, one the listener, and another the observer. The speaker will take four minutes to talk about his or her family. The listener can ask the speaker questions to get more information about the speaker's family. The observer will just watch to see if good listening is being practiced and will share what he or she observed at the end of the four minute period. The group roles will be rotated every four minutes until each group has had a chance to be the speaker, listener, and observer. At the end of the three rotations the listener will then draw a picture of the student's family that they learned about.

Before the students are put into groups of three, I will model exactly what each student role should look and sound like. In class we have discussed what listening looks like, sounds like, and feels like. We made a T-chart and it is hanging in the room. The observer can refer back to the chart when sharing with his group.

ASSESSMENT: Within each group and after each rotation the observer had a chance to assess. At the end of the activity the students drawings reflect how well they listened. We will make a human graph to show how each student felt about whether there was good listening and discuss why they felt the way they did.

MAKE A JACK-O-LANTERN

OBJECTIVE: Work in cooperative groups to create a jack-o-lantern. Have the children practice their social skills we have discussed in the room. Each member will have a job and needs to be sure they are doing it and not someone else's.

DIRECTIONS: The group will have a Manager in charge of materials, a Recorder who will circle their choices and a Drawer who will be in charge of drawing the final product. Materials-dominoes with 1,2,3 dots; a chart with attribute choices for the jack-o-lantern the drawer will draw; a piece of drawing paper; pencil. Turn the dominoes face down. The manager turns over one domino and counts the number of dots. The recorder then circles the head attribute that is by that number. Return the domino and continue this procedure for each of the other attributes. The drawer will then draw the jack-o-lantern using the circled attributes.

EVALUATION: The children really enjoyed the activity and had no trouble with the directions. The only problems came when the drawer was making the jack-o-lantern. Many negative comments could be heard like " That head looks stupid". When then discussed how the group could have helped the drawer in a more positive way.

B-Decision making, problem solving
U- Single product
I- Assigned roles
L- Teacher observation
D- Encourage others, accept others ideas

Activity # 3 Four in a Row

OBJECTIVE: Students will be given a grid of sixteen squares with a particular characteristic written in each box. Group members will identify characteristics that describe them and other members of their group. Group members will get to know the different qualities of others and how they may be alike.

DIRECTIONS: The class will be divided into groups of four for this activity. The member in charge of materials will get one grid and one pencil for his or her group. A designated recorder will write down the names of group members who show the different characteristics on the grid in the proper squares. The checker will be sure that everyone in the group has had a turn at sharing their characteristics. The group reporter will look for a line of four squares (up and down, across, or diagonal) that has at least one of the groups members name in it.

ASSESSMENT: At the end of the activity each group member will be asked to write down two interesting things they learned about the other members of their group. The group can also share how well they thought they worked together to get the task completed. The class as a whole could share what characteristics they might add to a future Four in a Row activity.

Likes to play soccer	Plays a musical instrument	Rides a bike	Likes to draw
Talked with a brother or sister	Watched a baseball game	Petted a cat or dog	Has ridden in a truck
Walked to school	Likes to eat spinach	Played a computer game	Can blow a bubble
Read a book with mom or dad	Called a friend on the telephone	Has helped clean the house	Has front teeth missing

"ADD ONS"

Objectives:

* *Builds class unity.*
* *Provides students the opportunity to find out about one another.*
* *Provide the opporunity to enhance written language skills.*

Directions:

1. Students work as partners or members of a team.
2. Each student is provided with a "sentence stem" topic and an appropriate-size paper strip to complete the sentence stem answer. Answers may be dictated, drawn, written, or glued with magazine cut-outs.
3. Students interview their partner or other team members using the sentence stem.
4. Completed sentence stems answers are displayed in class/team books, bulletin board charts, mobile hangings or paper chain charts.

SENTENCE STEM ADD-ON IDEAS ARE ENDLESS!

- My favorite movie...
- A goal I have is..
- Tomorrow I'll...
- I love to...
- I'm terrific because...
- My biggest wish is...
- I'm a good friend when...
- School is...
- The best part about school is...
- A great teacher....
- My favorite sport is...
- I like to think about...
- Once I...
- I'm glad to be me because....
- My favorite thing is...
- I like...
- I love...
- My favorite song is...
- I'd rather be...
- I'm happy when...
- I smile when...
- I hate to...
- I'm happiest when...
- I like to be with people who...
- Right now I feel...
- It's hard for me when...
- Someday I hope...
- I would like to...
- Sometimes I feel...
- I wish grown-ups would...
- I'd sure like it if...
- I wish I could change...
- If I were the teacher, I'd...
- My favorite book is...
- When I grow up...
- My favorite musical group is...

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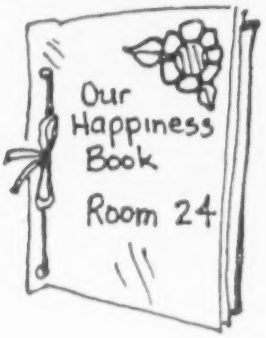
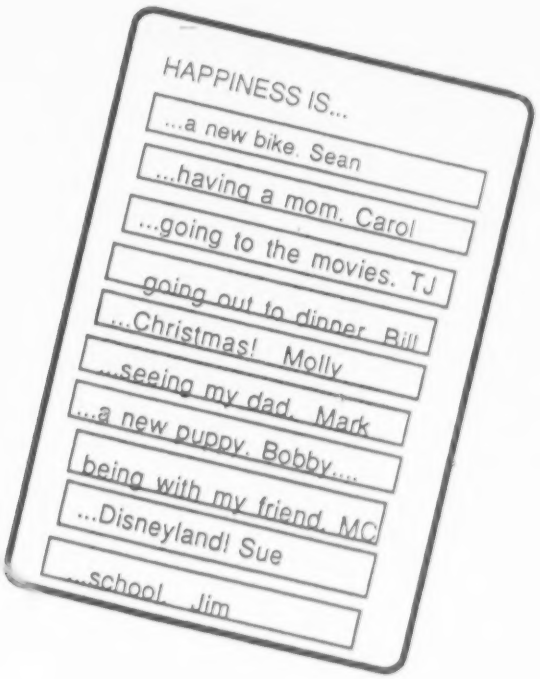
ADD ONS....AND ONS...AND ONS...AND ONS

TEAM MOBILES

CLASS BOOKS (TEAM BOOKS)



CHARTS



Cooperative learning is important because...

By:

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PMI CHART (PLUS/MINUS/INTERESTING QUESTIONS)

P (+)	
M(-)	
I (?)	

How to Assess Authentic Learning

ON YOUR OWN

UNIT PLAN USING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES GRID

Unit: Clouds Grade Level: 1ST

Subject Area: Science Timeline: 3 weeks

Major Goals of Unit:
1. learn how clouds are formed
2. learn about different cloud formations
3.

VERBAL/LINGUISTIC	LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL	VISUAL/SPATIAL	BODILY/KINESTHETIC
• read "The Cloud Book" • read Little Cloud	• chart types of clouds seen on our cloud walk • predict the weather	• cloud walk • sponge paint cloud shapes • create cloud shapes using shaving cream	• move like clouds blowing in the wind • act out the story Nimby

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC	INTERPERSONAL	INTRAPERSONAL	NATURALIST
• move like clouds being blown by the wind using different tempos of music	• pair-share about cloud walk • collaborative writing	• keep reflective journal	• cloud walk • experiments showing how clouds are formed

1. Whole-class learning experiences:	anticipation guide	illustrate cloud formations	create webs charts	
2. Whole-class assessments for learning experiences:	revisit at end of unit	end product	rubric	
3. Culminating event for unit:	"Pudding in a Cloud" snack			

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ON YOUR OWN

UNIT PLAN USING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES GRID

Unit: Oceans Grade Level: 2

Subject Area: Cross curricular Timeline: 4 weeks

Major Goals of Unit:
1. Research ocean life and report findings
2. Demonstrate an understanding of ocean environment
3. Prepare a group presentation on ocean life.

List at least five learning experiences/assessments under each intelligence.

VERBAL/LINGUISTIC	LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL	VISUAL/SPATIAL	BODILY/KINESTHETIC
• Research an ocean animal • Find 3 books on oceans to share with kindergarten. • Write a report on ocean life.	• Compare 2 ocean animals using a Venn diagram. • Fresh water/salt water experiments.	• Make a model of a coral reef. • Make a mural of the ocean levels. • Using Linkits make lengths of sharks & whales.	• Play shark in the Ocean. • Group work presentations.

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC	INTERPERSONAL	INTRAPERSONAL	NATURALIST
• Ocean rap • Record ocean sounds for reports. • Fish poems recitation.	• Work in groups on animal research. • Teacher/student conferences on projects.	• Journaling • Self Assessment	• Research the effects of pollution on the ocean. • study endangered ocean animals.

1. Whole-class learning experiences:	Models of Coral Reef	Comparing Ocean Animals	Ocean Level Characteristics	Student Portfolio
2. Whole-class assessments for learning experiences:	Rubric Assessment	Venn Diagram	Teacher made Quiz	Self Assessed

3. Culminating event for unit: Power Point Presentations to be shared with other classrooms.

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Thematic Unit: magic
Subject Area: cross curriculum
Grade Level: third
Timeline: 4 weeks

Activities:

- *activate prior knowledge of magic*
- *develop vocabulary for unit*
- *biography*
- *main idea and supporting details*
- *syllables*
- *fact and opinion*
- *illusion*
- *cause and effect*
- *descriptive words*
- *sequence story events*
- *following directions*
- *persuasive writing*
- *cooperative groups (posters)*
- *invisible ink messages*
- *research famous magicians and stunts*
- *compare/contrast Houdini and Copperfield*
- *videos of magic tricks*
- *discover number patterns*
- *write an autobiography*
- *critical thinking*
- *make inferences*
- *draw conclusions*
- *create a passport*
- *expository writing*
- *K-W-L chart*

Culminating Activity: magic show

Medium Lesson

Story Circle

Objectives:

- To improve storytelling skills
- To improve sequencing skills
- To improve expressive language skills
- To improve auditory memory skills

Materials: Tape recorder with a blank tape

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Seat the class in a circle. Tell the class they are going to do a story round. Explain that a story round is a story that is told by everyone in the class. One student starts the story, the second student in the circle tells the next part and so on, until the last person in the circle finishes the story.
2. Tape record the story so the class can listen to it later. Tell the students not to worry because you will help them.
3. Discuss sequence words that are used in stories (for example, *once upon a time, next, then, when, after, before, finally, the end*).
4. Choose a student to begin the story. Tell the students to be very quiet until it is their turn.
5. When the story is completed, play the tape. Have the class try to identify each speaker.

Consultation Ideas:

- Teacher has the students write a story using sequence words.
- Teacher divides the class into cooperative groups. Each group writes a story with everyone telling a part. Have each group share their story with the class.

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Medium Lesson

What Would You Do?

Objectives:

- To improve problem-solving skills
- To improve expressive language skills

Materials: None

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Tell the class they will be given a situation and asked what they would do to solve the problem.
2. Provide the class with a problem. Discuss the possible outcomes and decide which solution would be best. All students are encouraged to share what they would do. Allow enough time for all students to process the situation and respond with a solution.

Note: A puppet may be used with the lower grades to provide stimulation.

Examples of Problem Situations:

What would you do if you were alone and heard someone breaking into your house?
What would you do if you were lost in a busy shopping mall?
What would you do if you saw someone bullying your friend?
What would you do if your cat was stuck in your neighbor's tree?
What would you do if your dog ate your homework?
What would you do if your friend stole something in a store?
What would you do if a group of your friends wanted you to try drugs?
What would you do if you lost the key to your house?
What would you do if you lost $10.00 at school?
What would you do if you scraped your knee and your parents were not at home?

Consultation Ideas:

- Discuss with the teacher which students are having difficulty and need an extended wait time for problem solving.
- Teacher has the students write and illustrate the solutions to the problems.

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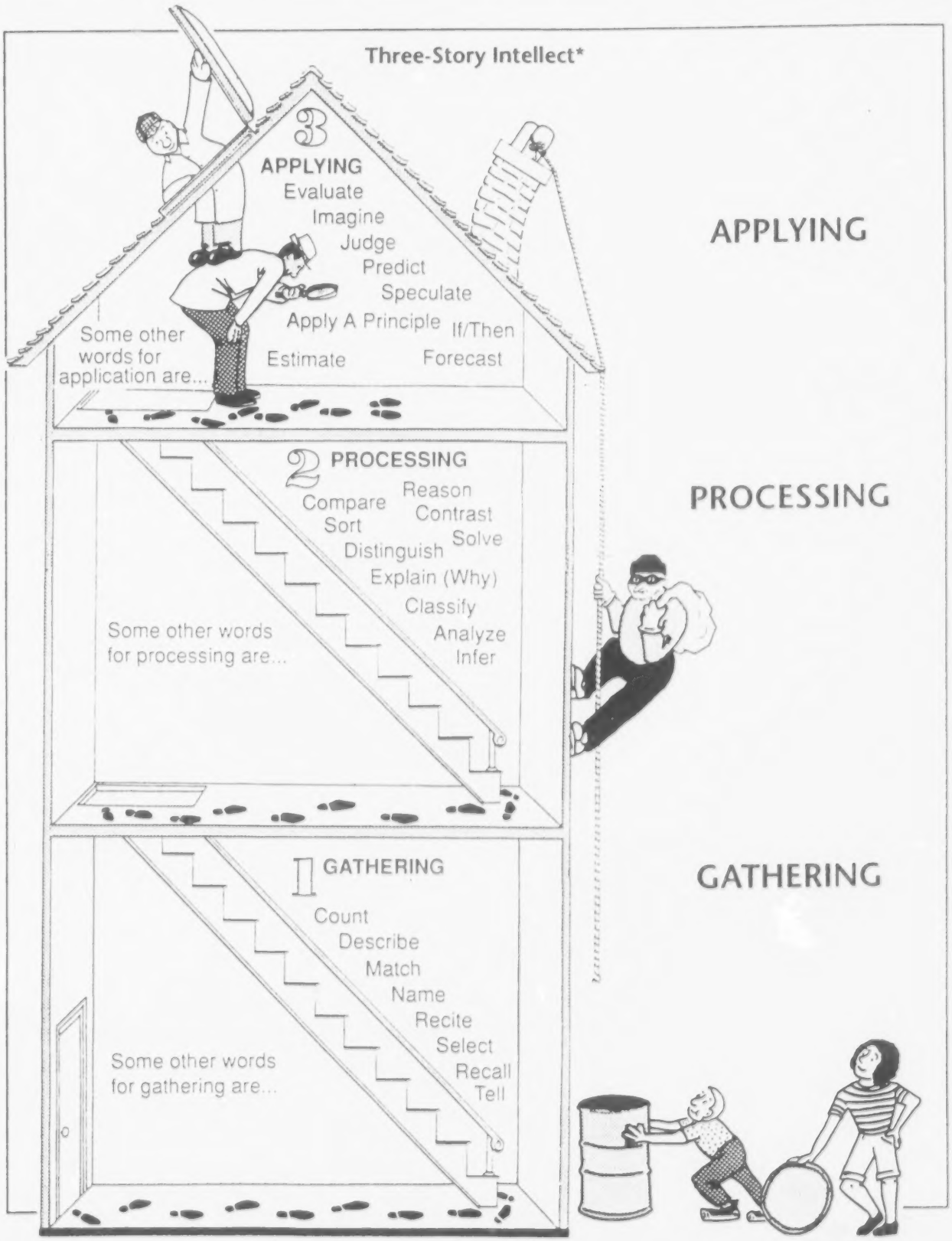

Three-Story Intellect*
3
APPLYING
Evaluate
Imagine
Judge
Predict
Speculate
Apply A Principle
If/Then
Estimate
Forecast
Some other words for application are...
APPLYING
2
PROCESSING
Compare
Reason
Sort
Contrast
Distinguish
Solve
Explain (Why)
Classify
Analyze
Infer
Some other words for processing are...
PROCESSING
I
GATHERING
Count
Describe
Match
Name
Recite
Select
Recall
Tell
Some other words for gathering are...
GATHERING

Medium Lesson

Character Web

Objectives:

- To improve descriptive skills
- To improve vocabulary skills

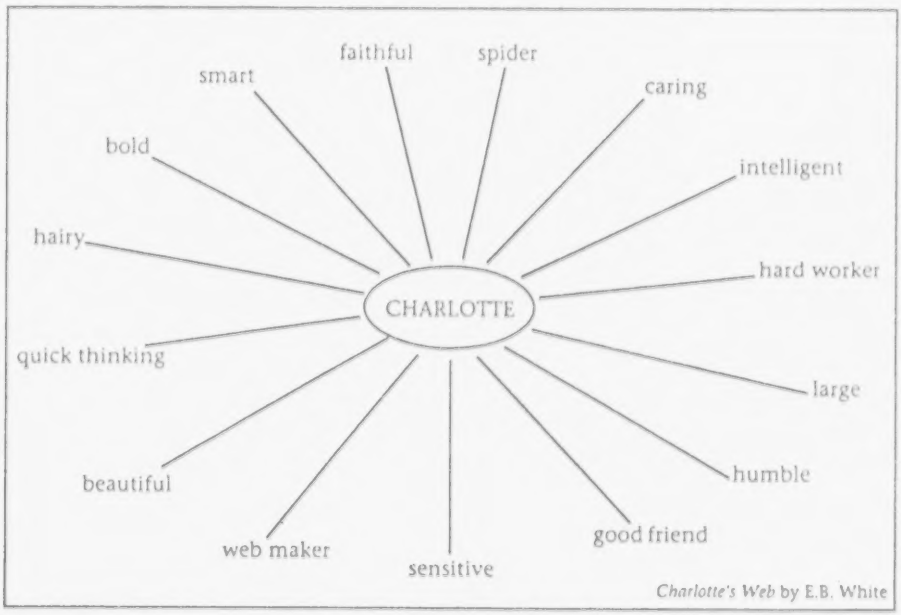
Materials: A large piece of construction paper

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Choose a character from a familiar story. Write the character's name in the middle of the construction paper.
2. Tell the students to think of all the words that could describe that character. Write the students' responses on the paper.
3. Have the students explain why the words on the paper describe the character (for example, *Charlotte was <u>smart</u> because she...*).
4. When the web is completed, display it in the classroom.

Example of a Character Web:



Modification: Have older students locate passages in the story to justify their responses. You may wish to divide the class into cooperative groups for this portion of the activity.

Consultation Ideas:

- Discuss with the teacher which stories are being read by the class and select a character from one of them for this activity.
- Teacher has students think of other story characters who could be described using many or all of the words contained in the web. Discuss the similarities and differences.

THE KWL

Topic: _____

Know	**W**ant to know	**L**earned

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THE INFORMATION CHART

Topic:

Who	What	When	Where	Why

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THE T-CHART

Topic _____

Looks Like	Sounds Like

SKYLIGHT PUBLISHING

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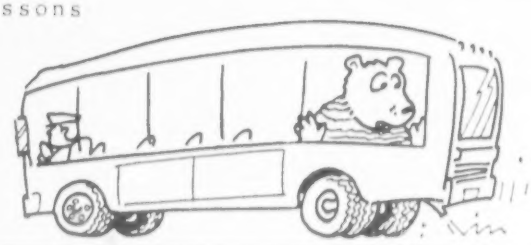
Name _____

Draw a picture to show what will happen next. Then write a sentence to tell about your picture.



1. You are riding the bus and you miss the place you should have gotten off.

2. Every day you brush your teeth carefully. You do not eat sweets. Now you go to see the dentist.

3. Your neighbor gives you a new bike.

○ = too easy □ = too hard △ = just right

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Name _____

Draw a picture to show what will happen next. Then write a sentence to tell about your picture.

1. A big dog is trying to take your lunch.

2. You and your friends are playing in the park when it begins to rain.

3. Your good friend just gave you a present that you do not want.

○ = too easy □ = too hard △ = just right

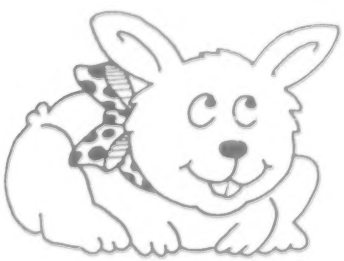
Name _____

Draw a picture to show what will happen next. Then write a sentence to tell about your picture.

1. You buy an ice-cream cone, and it falls on the sidewalk before you take a bite.

2. You get a bunny for a pet.

3. Your family has a surprise party for you, and you are very surprised.



○ = too easy □ = too hard △ = just right

Skill: Predicting consequences and conclusions

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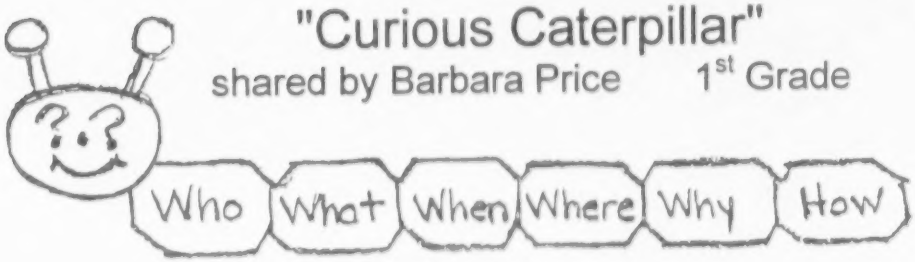


Use 3x5 note cards for each section of the caterpillar.

- Have students read a story. As a whole class have the children tell how they would answer caterpillars questions. You would write their responses under each part of the caterpillar.

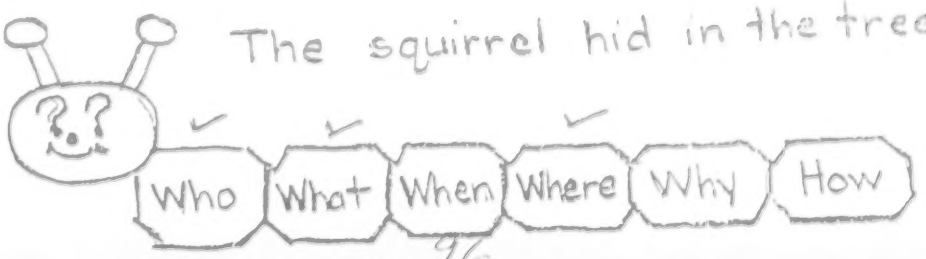
- Have students read a story. Give each student a post-it note and have them answer a caterpillar question of their choice. Have volunteers for each appropriate question come up and put their post-it note underneath the corresponding section of the caterpillar.

- Have students read a story. Using a individual student dry erase boards have each student write the answer to the why question. Follow same procedure for each question that applies to the story.

- Before reading a story go over the questions on the caterpillar. Explain to the students that as they read the story these are the things they should be looking for in the story.

- Use for writing complete sentences. Put a check mark up above each question you want answered in the sentences students create.

Ex.



"Let Your Sentence Grow"

shared by Barbara Price 1st Grade

Start with a short, simple sentence such as: The dog ran. Ask the students to describe what they think the dog looks like. Explain that you want to add more words to the sentence so everybody will have a better picture of the dog and what he is doing. On the board put:

The dog ran.
The _____ dog ran.
The _____ _____ dog ran.
The _____ _____ dog ran _____.

Have a student give a word to fill in the first blank. Then have another student add another word to go with the first student's response. The next student would add something after ran.

At the end of the activity have the students close their eyes. Read the original sentence and then read the final sentence and have the students discuss which sentence gave them a better picture of the dog and why.

Another variation would be to start the activity by having the children draw what they think the dog looked like. Have students share their drawings. Then at the end of the activity have them draw a picture of what the dog looks like in the final sentence and share those drawings. Discuss which sentence gave a better description of the dog

A follow-up activity would be to have the students work with a partner and do the attached worksheet. Once the students are comfortable with the process they could create their own "Growing Sentences".

Name_____

The cat played.

The _____ cat played.

The _____ _____ cat played.

The _____ _____ cat played _____.

The shark swam.

The _____ shark swam.

The _____ _____ shark swam.

The _____ _____ shark swam _____.

Name _____

Make descriptive sentences. Use words from the box to complete the sentences below.

bulldozer	mop
dinosaur	peanut
flagpole	snail
goose	worm
hippopotamus	zebra

1. I eat like a _____.
2. Don't run like a _____.
3. He worked like a _____.
4. She sang like a _____.
5. My hair looks like a _____.
6. It is the same size as a _____.
7. He is as tall as a _____.
8. You are as fast as a _____.
9. Let me go as high as a _____.
10. Don't move like a _____.

Draw a picture of your funniest sentence.

○ = too easy □ = too hard △ = just right

Making Mirrors, © 1986 David S. Lake Publishers

Skill: Using descriptive language

Name _____

Fill in the blanks to make each sentence tell more about its topic. Then draw a picture to go with each sentence.

1. My friend is _____, _____, and _____.

2. My house is _____, _____, and _____.

3. My school is _____, _____, and _____.

○ = too easy □ = too hard △ = just right

Skill: Using descriptive language

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Name _____

Draw a picture of each item. Then write three words to tell more about the item in each of your pictures.

1. a scarecrow

_____, _____, _____

2. a peanut-butter sandwich

_____, _____, _____

3. a dinosaur

_____, _____, _____

○ = too easy □ = too hard △ = just right

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Skill: Using descriptive language

Once Upon a Dragon

Objectives:

- To improve descriptive skills
- To improve storytelling skills
- To improve vocabulary skills

Materials: None

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Tell the class they are going to make up a story about a dragon. The students will decide what the dragon looks like, where he lives, what he does, etc.
2. Begin to tell the story. After each sentence, pause and ask the students to provide additional information. The class discusses which responses should be included in the story. Key words and phrases may be written on the chalkboard. Restate each sentence incorporating the selected responses. Offer frequent review of all or part of the story as it progresses.
3. When the story is finished, help the class retell it with as much detail as possible.

Example of a Story Outline:

Once upon a time, there was a dragon named _____.
What is a good name for the dragon?
(Name) looked very _____.
What did the dragon look like? (green, scary, big, etc.)
His (body part) was/were _____.
What did his _____ look like? (Have students describe dragon's nose, eyes, ears, mouth, tongue, legs, feet, arms/wings, tail, etc.)
(Name) lived far, far away in a _____ .
Where did the dragon live? (forest, castle, cave, tree, house, etc.)
One day when (Name) woke up, he felt _____ .
How did the dragon feel? (tired, happy, sick, lonely, excited, etc.)
(Name) decided to take a walk to visit _____ .
Who did the dragon visit? (friend, relatives, doctor, neighbor, wizard, etc.)
On his way he saw a _____ .
What did the dragon see? (witch, genie, knight, princess, troll, etc.)
He/She/It looked very _____ .
What did he/she/it look like? (color, size, shape, unusual features, etc.)
He/She/It seemed to be _____ .
What was he/she/it doing? (singing, dancing, sleeping, eating, crying, etc.)
He had never seen anything like that before and wondered _____ .
What did the dragon wonder? (should he run away, should he help, should he speak, etc.)
(Name) thought and thought and finally decided to _____ .
What did the dragon decide? (rescue it, hide, talk to it, invite it to come along, etc.)

What happened next? (Have the students finish the story in their own words.)

Consultation Ideas:

- Teacher has the students illustrate the dragon and write a brief description.
- Teacher has the students select several of the adjectives used to describe the dragon and then use each adjective in a simile (for example, *The dragon's tail was as long as a train*).

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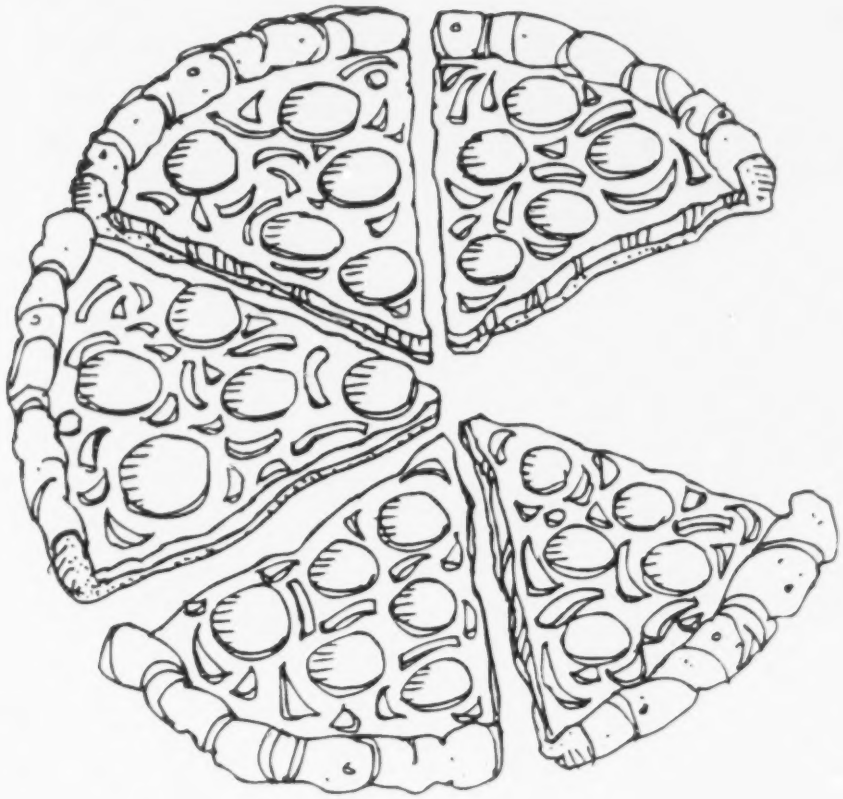
name

The Pizza



Write one super sentence.
Describe who did what, when, and where.

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Research Journal PMI

Week of _____

Actions Taken:

Reflection:

PLUSES (+)	MINUSES (-)	INTERESTING (?)

Comments, Notes (Continued on back, as needed):

Today is November 30, M.
I had turke[illegible]
[illegible]
I want to [illegible]
I want to [illegible]

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16

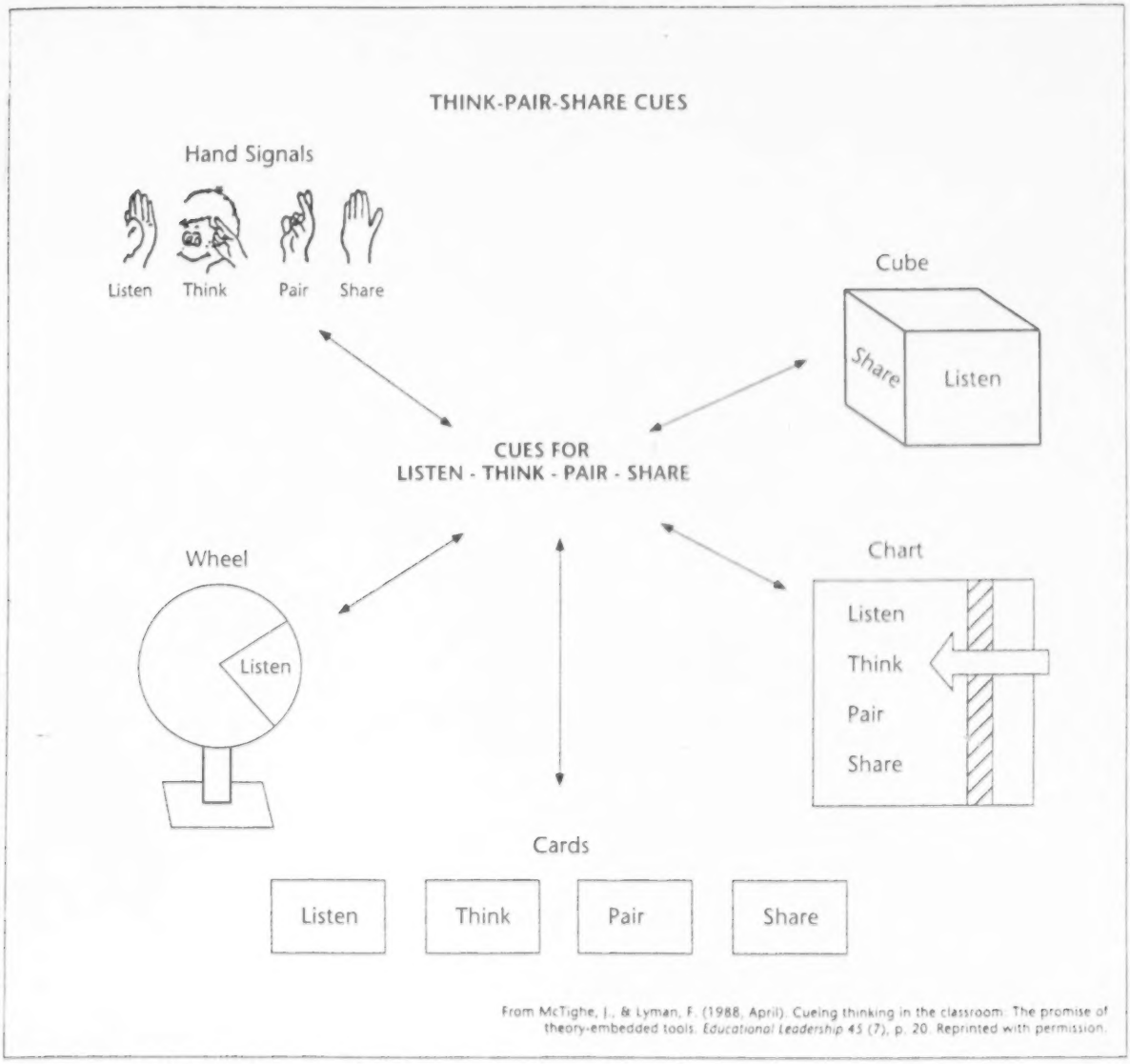

Figure 2 Think-Pair-Share Cues

Think-pair-share is a multimode discussion cycle in which students listen to a question or presentation, have time to *think* individually, talk with each other in *pairs*, and finally *share* responses with the larger group. The teacher signals students to switch from listening to *think*, *pair*, and *share* modes by using cues. (See Figure 2.)

Cueing enables teachers to manage students' thinking by combating the competitiveness, impulsivity, and passivity present in the time-worn recitation model. Both wait time I and wait time II can be consistently achieved with think-pair-share since students raise their hands only on signal, not directly after the question or a response. Students, individually and in pairs, may write or diagram their thoughts. Other cues give scripts or options for how students are to think or work in pairs. For instance, teachers may cue them to reach consensus, engage in problem solving, or assume the role of devil's advocate. (See Figure 3.)

The overall effect of these coordinated elements is a concrete, valid, and practical system made man-

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If...Then

Objectives:

- To improve problem-solving skills
- To increase length of utterance

Materials: None

Grades: K-5

Procedure:

1. Model an "if...then" utterance (*If I were rich, I would buy a huge house*).
2. Call on each student and say, *Finish this sentence: If I were rich, I would....* Ask students to respond using the full utterance. Accept all responses even if some students repeat a previous answer.

Examples of "If...Then" Leading Utterances:

If I were president...	If I could be any animal...
If I were invisible...	If I could go anywhere...
If I were famous...	If I were at the circus...
If I were a dog...	If I were at the beach...
If I were a teacher...	If I were at the zoo...
If I were a tree...	If I were at home...
If I had a pet monster...	If I were at the mall...
If I could fly...	If I had magic powers...
If I lost my wallet...	If I were an astronaut...
If I were bored...	If I were at the park...

Consultation Ideas:

- Teacher has students choose an "if...then" utterance and write it in their journals.
- Teacher uses "if...then" sentences to problem-solve class issues, showing there is a direct relationship between actions and their consequences (*If I don't finish my assignment..., If I forget my lunch money..., If I talk while the teacher is talking...*).

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PHASES OF INTRODUCTION OF SOCIAL SKILLS*	
PHASE	SOCIAL SKILLS Communication (C), Trust (T), Leadership (L), Conflict Resolution (CR)
Forming *to organize groups and establish behavior guidelines*	Use a 6" voice. (C) Listen to your neighbor. (C) Stay with the group. (C) Heads together. (C) Do your job. (L) Help each other. (L)
Norming *to complete assigned tasks and build effective relationships*	Include all members. (L) Encourage others. (L) Listen with focus. (T) Let all participate. (L) Respect each other's opinions. (T) Stay on task. (L)
Conforming *to promote critical thinking and maximize the learning of all*	Clarify. (C) Paraphrase ideas. (C) Give examples. (C) Probe for differences. (CR) Generate alternatives. (CR) Seek consensus. (CR)
Storming *to function effectively and enable the work of the team*	Sense tone. (C) Disagree with idea not person. (CR) Keep an open mind. (T) See all points of view. (CR) Try to agree. (CR) Contribute own ideas. (L)
Performing *to foster higher-level thinking skills, creativity and depth intuition*	Elaborate on ideas. (C) Integrate ideas. (L) Justify ideas. (CR) Extend ideas. (C) Synthesize. (L) Reach consensus. (CR)
Re-forming *to apply across curriculum and transfer into life beyond the classroom*	Begin cycle of social skills again—each time: • New group is formed. • New member joins group. • Member is absent from group. • New task is given. • Long absences occur.

Complete sentence	Beginning	Beginning And Middle	Beginning Middle And End
Points	0	1	2
Clear	Tells Who or What	Tells Who and What	Tells Who and What with a When, Where, or How
Points	0	1	2
Descriptive words	None	One	Two Or More
Points	0	1	2